

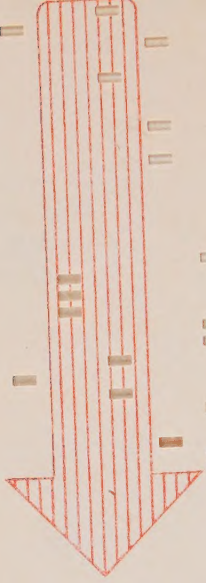
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PEEPS AT MANY LANDS
NEW ZEALAND
P. A. VAILE

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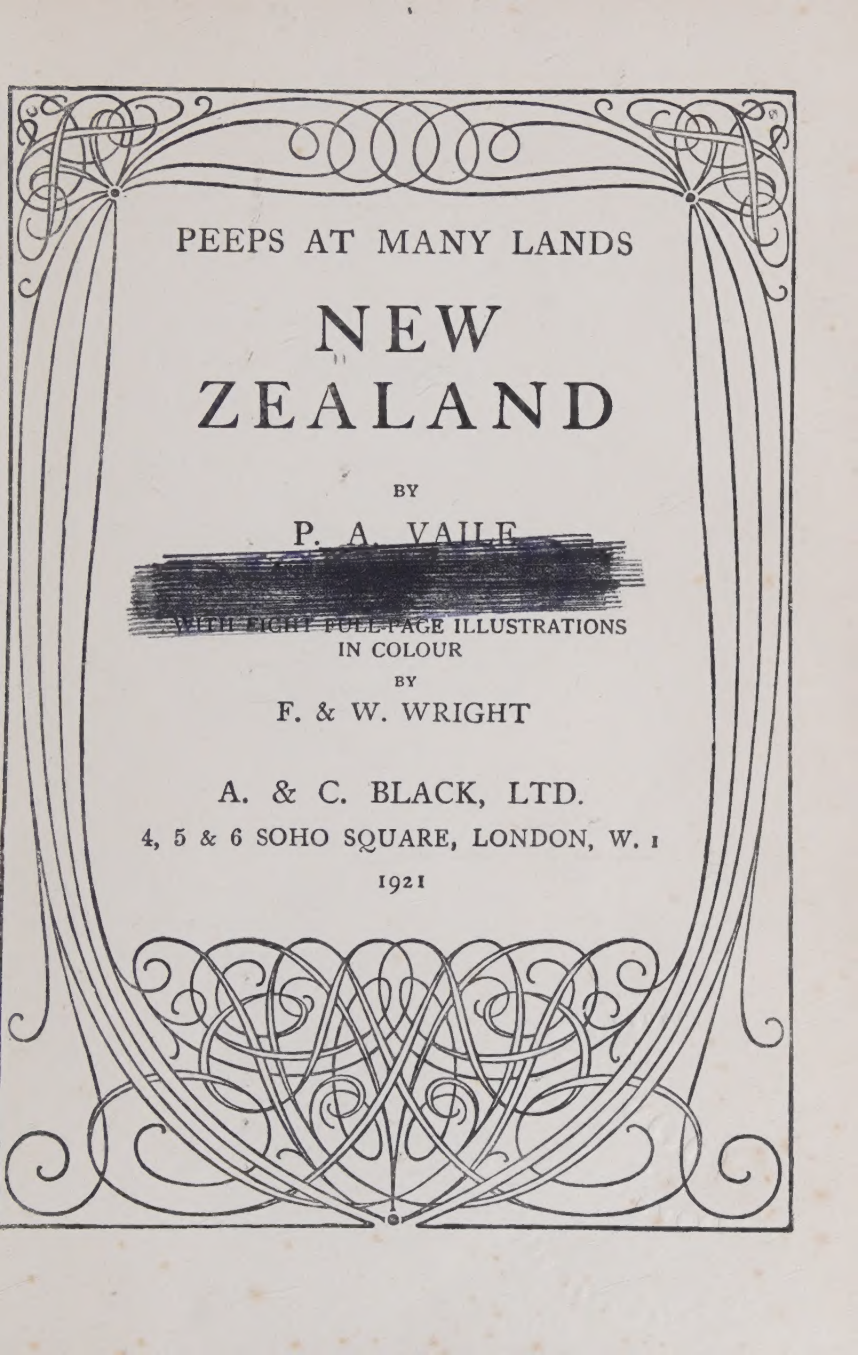
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PEEPS AT MANY LANDS

NEW
ZEALAND

BY

P. A. VAILE

~~WITH EIGHT FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS
IN COLOUR~~

BY

F. & W. WRIGHT

A. & C. BLACK, LTD.

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NEW ZEALAND

CHAPTER I

THE COMMON NOTION OF NEW ZEALAND

NEW ZEALAND is a most interesting portion of the British Empire, but comparatively little is known about it in England. Very many people are under the impression that it is quite close to Australia, whereas, under existing conditions, it is a voyage of about four days.

Quite a number of people whom I meet here take it for granted that because I am a New Zealander I must be associated in some way with sheep-farming.

It is not perhaps fair to blame them for this, because New Zealand really is nearly as far from the heart of the world as it is possible to get ; and many Englishmen would be inclined to argue that their lack of information about it is at least as justifiable as the New Zealander's haziness about the English counties.

Be that as it may, many in England are under the impression that we are a race of sheep-farmers and

New Zealand

Rugby footballers. They are ready to concede that both the mutton and the football are fairly good, but beyond these outstanding facts they find it hard to go. They have conjured up a picture of a band of hardy adventurers, who cling tenaciously to a wind-swept islet, and eke out some sort of an existence by farming sheep ; or mayhap their notion of it is derived from stories that have filtered through to them from someone who had an uncle or an aunt who went out there many years ago. In this case probably hot-springs and the Maori will occupy a prominent place in the foreground.

It is true that there are a great number of sheep-farmers in New Zealand. Many people have obtained their ideas of a sheep-farmer from the pictures which show a hairy person in a red flannel shirt and corduroys bringing home a dead sheep, slung across his saddle, to the wife who is nursing an apple-faced youngster on one arm, while she waves a welcome from the back-door of the lean-to with the other.

These will no doubt be surprised to hear that many a New Zealand sheep-farmer lives in a house that they would envy, keeps his motor-car and carriage, his thoroughbred horses, has a billiard-table and a piano, and many other luxuries that are unknown to them.

These are they who have fought the fight and won. There are still many nearer to Nature than these who are fighting the fire, the forest, and the flood, carving out their homes even as did the pioneers of old.

The Common Notion of New Zealand

Nothing could be farther from the actual facts than the popular misconception of what New Zealand is. I have often heard people, who, in my opinion, were merely existing, speak pityingly of friends or relatives who had gone to New Zealand. They did not know that they were the ones who should have been pitied.

The inhabitant of the Dominion does not require any commiseration. It would be hard indeed to find in the world any community which, speaking broadly, is so happy, so healthy, so prosperous, and so intelligently governed as is that of New Zealand.

I know that New Zealand looks only a very small place on the map, especially lying, as it apparently does, so close to its big neighbour Australia. It is, however, actually much larger than England, Scotland, and Wales put together, and so far from suffering any inconvenience or disability from living there, the inhabitants of the favoured land enjoy many advantages which would be absolutely denied to them if they were in a similar position in England.

The cities are well laid out, and on the whole efficiently and honestly managed. Nearly every town of any size has its well-equipped system of electric tramways. The telephone and telegraph are at the service of everyone. Theatres and other places of amusement are found in all towns, and these are visited periodically by excellent companies, which reproduce the latest London successes.

The leading London papers and magazines go

New Zealand

straight to the Dominion, and are read with the greatest interest by thousands, who either came originally from England, or who are descended from those who did so. Tens of thousands of New Zealanders have visited England, some of them again and again, and these nearly always make a point of keeping in close touch with the Old Country, which is always out there called "home." A New Zealander who has never been to England will say : " I am going ' home ' next month."

I was born in New Zealand, and on and off have lived there many years—at least twenty-five. Besides that I lived for years in Australia, and since then have wandered round the world again and again, but England—in fact, London—is always " home " to me ; but, notwithstanding that, I feel that for men or women, boys or girls, who wish to live quiet, comfortable, healthy, easy lives, New Zealand is the best place in the world.

The People of New Zealand

CHAPTER II

THE PEOPLE OF NEW ZEALAND

I PUT the people of New Zealand almost in the first place because I think the most interesting feature of any country must always be its people. It is perhaps hard to describe the New Zealander in any short and yet general terms, but I shall try. He may resent the description, but I must risk that. In short, then, the New Zealander is, in my opinion, a judicious blend of the Englishman and the American.

He is strong, alert both physically and mentally, and possessed of an equable temperament. He works well and plays well. The real stress of life has not reached him in his far-off island. He is removed from the fierce competition of England, the scorching dollar-grapple of America, so it comes to pass that he has more time to spend with his wife and children, and sometimes I think the home life of New Zealand more nearly approaches the ideal than any that I know, for here boys and girls are so much more associated with their parents, and parents are so much more like companions, than they are in many other places.

The New Zealander is not worried by any thought of position. Once upon a time, much to the disgust of a worthy brewer, who from very small "beginnings" had risen to be mayor of a colonial town, I said: "You

New Zealand

know, Mr. Bung, that south of the line there is no such thing as position."

This, although a slight exaggeration, quite expresses the condition of society in New Zealand. Here doctors, lawyers, barristers, clergymen, journalists, successful merchants, and the like, form the "aristocracy." There are, it is true, large numbers of what might possibly be called middle-class people, but really the true democratic spirit is so dominant that it wants but a little, a very little, money, and the possessor of it finds his way into New Zealand society almost as easily as the parvenu does into the highest circles in England.

People in New Zealand are much more genial than they are in England. There is not that air of habitual reserve that is so apparent, and in most cases rightly so, here. In New Zealand one is not under suspicion of being a burglar or a confidence-trick man until there is at least a *prima facie* case made out against him.

New Zealand is unquestionably the most English of England's possessions. Indeed, I go so far as to say that in many ways the New Zealander has improved a little on the original article. This may sound vain-glorious. It really is not, for if I am correct in my idea the credit nearly all belongs to Mr. John Bull.

Many years ago, when that dear old gentleman laid the foundations of the Dominion of New Zealand, he sent hundreds and thousands of his best to do it, for in those days it was an adventure to go out there. So it fell out that of Scotchmen, Irishmen, and Englishmen,

The People of New Zealand

many of the best went away to carve out for themselves homes in the seagirt, lonely islands right at the other end of the world.

These were strong and resolute men, who went out to break in the wilderness, and while they were doing it they became fused into a composite body—a little budding nation, if you will, although in this connection I dislike the word. Here the English, the Irish, and the Scotch are still distinct nations. In New Zealand they have become to a much greater extent welded together. This, and the fact that the life out there is freer, more open, and unrestrained, has tended to improve both the mind and the physique even of those who first went out, so that now I think we have a people who are possessed in a larger degree of those attributes which tradition ascribes to dear old Father Bull than are those who have remained at home.

However, be this as it may, the fact remains that New Zealand well deserves her name, “The Britain of the South,” for it is impossible for an Englishman of the right sort to travel there without feeling that he is at home. He may at first miss a little servility which is sometimes mistaken here for civility, and he may sometimes think the railway guard or the hotel clerk not quite so deferential as he might be, but he must remember that they are not expecting to be paid for humbling themselves before him, and soon he gets to like the open, manly, self-reliant spirit that is so prominent a characteristic of the race.

New Zealand

An amusing instance of this occurred at Rotorua, the famous hot-lakes town in Auckland, some years ago. A perfect specimen of the man who cannot get on in any new country was travelling round seeing the sights. By chance he had been sitting next to a commercial traveller on the coach. Now, a New Zealand "drummer," as they call commercial travellers in America, is quite a different thing from a drummer in England. In New Zealand he may occupy a really good position, feel himself to be a man, and he is not insulted without causing someone trouble.

When at the end of the day's journey the coach pulled up at the hotel, the tourist asked the "drummer" to share a bottle of wine with him, for he had been a pleasant companion, and had helped to make the hours fly. As the wine was being opened the tourist asked his friend what he was doing in the district, as he seemed to know it so well. He thought at first that he was, like himself, a tourist. The commercial traveller explained frankly what he was, for there it is no shame, whereupon the tourist rose, and begged to be excused from drinking with him. The "drummer" was a fine athletic fellow. "Certainly," he said, "but I'll show you how we treat chaps like you here." He caught him by the collar of the coat with one hand, screwed him round so that his back was to him, then with the other hand he poured his wine down his back and thrust him away, to the amusement of those who were present.

Years ago there were quite a number of people of

The Boys of New Zealand

this type, but of late years Canada has been more favoured, and the class of Englishman that is going to New Zealand is one that soon makes himself at home, and consequently his path is by no means a rough one.

CHAPTER III

THE BOYS OF NEW ZEALAND

DURING the recent visit of Sir John Gorst to New Zealand he was particularly struck by the children. Many a time did he refer to their bone and sinew, their ruddy cheeks and bright eyes, and, truth to tell, New Zealand is an ideal place for children, for here in many ways they grow up much closer to Nature than they do in older and more thickly populated countries, and Dame Nature rewards them for their intimacy and love.

The New Zealand boy "comes to hand" much earlier than his English relation. This is perhaps because he has to "fend for himself" sooner. I do not mean in so far as regards work, for there we practically have none of the shocking child-labour that one sees so much of in England and America, but he "cuts loose from the apron-strings" sooner. He is bigger and stronger, and more self-reliant. The colonial boy of fifteen is frequently as wide awake as the English lad of twenty. He who lives near to Nature must observe. The nearer he lives the more he sees. Here we are as far away as we can get. Consequently observation must almost be put with conversation as one of the lost arts.

New Zealand

Sport is of the life of the New Zealand lad. He is in it and of it most of the time. It is so much cheaper and more accessible than it is in England. Rugby football is, of course, the great game in New Zealand, and the boys take to this very soon after they can walk.

Self-reliance and resource are prominent characteristics of the New Zealand lad. Side by side with this runs a vein of hardness, which perhaps is more apparent than real, and a certain amount of irreverence towards age—and other things. This is the usual tendency in new countries, but those who have the forming of the character of the youth of a country should make it their duty to see and, if necessary, to modify or correct these tendencies.

A short time ago I went down to Tilbury to meet an Auckland lad of fifteen years of age. He had come "home" to shoot for the Lady Gwendolen Guinness prize for boys. Some weeks later I went down to Bisley, and saw him shoot. He had come fourteen thousand miles to fire fourteen shots!

He was beaten in the Guinness prize by one point. In the afternoon he was beaten again, this time in the miniature rifle competition, by one point. This speaks for itself in many ways. The competition really was too short. Imagine anyone coming fourteen thousand miles to fire fourteen shots! This should surely be obvious to those well-intentioned and zealous persons who attend to and organize these boys' competitions. The test should be made more exhaustive.

The Boys of New Zealand

This, however, is by the way, and is not of so much importance. The point that was borne in upon me, the point that is of great importance, was the difference in the physique of this young New Zealander and the other competitors. It was so apparent that one could not overlook it, and it is merely another instance that serves to emphasize the duty the State owes to the growing youth of this nation—the duty of seeing to its physical education.

Now I am afraid you will think I am allowing my love for New Zealand to warp my judgment in favour of her people. It really is not so. I have of recent years travelled so much that I feel sure I am able to take the cosmopolitan view, to dissociate myself from the New Zealand standpoint. Were it not so I am afraid I could not write what follows.

As you will have gathered from what I have written, I have a very hearty admiration for the New Zealand boy, but there is one thing that clamours for immediate attention from his teachers. He is falling into a very bad habit of pronunciation, and his speech is often very careless. He takes great liberties with his vowels, and he puts in vowels that are not wanted.

He very often says “neow” when he means “now,” and “deoubt” for “doubt.”

This is very objectionable, but he has a worst fault still. He says “toime” for “time,” “foive” for “five,” “moind” for “mind,” and so on. Also you will frequently hear, as indeed you do now in

New Zealand

England, “ mials ” for “ miles ”—two syllables instead of one.

There are other cases that I could give, but these should suffice. Unless these tendencies are fought we shall soon have a New Zealand accent as pronounced as the American ; indeed, with many lads it is not far removed from it already. It is most marked when the boys first come to England, and English visitors to the Dominion cannot fail to notice it. In the matter of speech the English lad has, as indeed is quite natural, an advantage. This unpleasant habit has become more marked during the last five or six years. I have known cases where in England it has put a youth at a considerable disadvantage, for if not checked it leads to great uncouthness.

The New Zealand boy is very quick to learn. He has already distinguished himself as a Rhodes scholar, and in other ways.

Most of the boys are educated at public schools, or, as they are called here, board schools, but great numbers go to the colleges which there take the place the English public schools do here.

CHAPTER IV

NEW ZEALAND GIRLS

WHAT I have said of the New Zealand boys applies in great measure to the girls. In every way they lead a freer, more unconventional life than do English girls.

New Zealand Girls

In their case my general remark about the New Zealander being a judicious blend of the Englishman and the American receives some corroboration, for in her relations with the boys the New Zealand girl is very frank and natural.

Much care is taken with her education, and the daughters of those who can afford it are taught many accomplishments, such as music, painting, and languages, and are often brought to England to finish their studies. The State schools are available for girls, and many use them. The upper classes, however, generally send their children to private schools, where they are very well taught by highly qualified teachers from England and the Continent.

Much of her life the New Zealand girl spends in the open air, and the effect of this is shown in her colour, her gait, and her physical development. She can generally swim; probably also she can take an oar. She is frequently a rider, a lawn-tennis player, a golfer, or a hockey player.

She is a charming companion, and nowhere, perhaps, does she appear to greater advantage than in her free and natural surroundings, although, like her sister in other lands, she is quite at home in the ballroom.

In New Zealand the women have for many years past had the right to vote. They have exercised it well. An increasingly large proportion of them are taking up professions and trades. There is already at least one lady barrister, and there are, I believe, several lady

New Zealand

doctors practising. The place that has been given to women in New Zealand has not in any way diminished the respect and esteem between the sexes. Both boys and girls take an intelligent interest in public affairs much sooner than they do in England.

New Zealand women and girls dress with very good taste, but, quite naturally, not so well as they do in England, where so much money is squandered on dress.

The climate of New Zealand, particularly in summer, is especially favourable for all kinds of outdoor amusement. Then a very popular form of amusement is the picnic. Sometimes this is by boat to a favourite resort on the coast or in the harbour ; sometimes it is a driving party, when boys and girls combine and hire a large break, or perchance use their own vehicles, or it may be that they elect to ride. Many delightful excursions are thus made to the beautiful waterfalls and natural bush, which are generally within driving distance of the large cities. It is no uncommon thing for picnic parties to ride or drive twenty or twenty-five miles to the appointed place.

Athletically the New Zealand girl has not yet had much opportunity to win fame before the world, but when the time comes she will not, I think, be found wanting, for she is very proficient in all field games. Viewed in the light of the highest class here the average girl would be at a disadvantage, as her opportunities for meeting the best players, and so improving her game, are much restricted.

New Zealand Girls

I have spoken about the very defective pronunciation and accent that is creeping in amongst the New Zealand boys. This, I am glad to say, is not nearly so pronounced amongst the girls. I attribute this partly to the fact that there is a far larger percentage of English and foreign teachers in the girls' schools than there is in the boys'. In the schools of the colony, particularly the State schools, the great majority of the masters are New Zealand born and educated. They are, in many cases, spreading the objectionable practice. A short time ago I travelled home with a New Zealander, an M.A. of the New Zealand University, and a brilliant scholar. It was painful to hear him say "plice" for "place." Fortunately such a case as his, even in New Zealand, is rare. I should prefer to pass this matter by, as it is unpleasant to think of. I have written about it in New Zealand, but those who live amongst it do not realize how bad it is, and how fast it is growing.

I had a very remarkable illustration of it in one family a few years ago. There were two boys and two girls. One of the boys was a boarder at a college. The other was a day-boy at the same institution. The girls went to a school where English teachers were employed. The boy who was always away from home was almost a little Yankee; the boy who came within the influence of the home each day was a modified American. The girls, who had both correct teaching at school and good home example, spoke perfectly and

New Zealand

in a charming manner, as do so many New Zealand girls who have been educated with care.

It would be hard to tell the well-educated, well-bred New Zealand girl from the English girl of the same class, were it not for the greater air of decision and strength, a certain added force that strikes the observer, and possibly in some cases a little less repose. This, however, is easily forgiven, for it is only in very rare cases that these characteristics obtrude themselves so as to jar on the most sensitive ; indeed, unless one is a shrewd observer it is quite likely that they pass unremarked, while the vivacity and spontaneity have a charm of their own that is frequently appreciated by those who cannot emulate it, even when desiring to, for the shackles of custom are on them.

CHAPTER V

ATHLETIC SPORTS IN NEW ZEALAND

I DO not know how I can hope to deal with sport in New Zealand in a chapter. It would fill a book, or many books, for if ever there was a community that loves sport *and follows it*, that is New Zealand. There nearly everyone either plays some game, or follows some pastime, or *has done so*. In England sport is worshipped, but many millions of those who hang in breathless silence upon the turn of a footballer's ankle have never felt the leather on their toes.

Athletic Sports in New Zealand

This is the weakness of the English love of sport. It is also the tragedy of it, for we may take it for granted that but few of those who show so keen an interest in sport have neglected any opportunity to get to it. In millions of cases they have never had the chance, and it is very sad to think of this, for it has had, and will continue to have, a great effect on the physique of the nation.

Now, in sunny, far-away New Zealand practically every boy and girl has enough to eat and drink, and is able to be always warm, and to get, if not quite as much play as he or she desires, quite as much as is desirable.

Rugby football is, of course, the king of games in New Zealand, as it ought to be in England. I look upon cricket and "soccer" as effeminate occupations by the side of Rugby. If ever there was a game framed to express all that is best in an Englishman, all that by tradition is attached to the name of John Bull, that game is "rugger." Tell me something that you have to do in cricket or "soccer" equal to going down on the ball before a crowd of Welsh forwards, and I shall give in at once.

Rugby seems almost framed to suit the best traits of the best Englishmen, and personally I can never understand any game holding a stronger place in the affection of British people.

Rugby football is very well managed in New Zealand. It is carried on under what is called the District System. The Auckland area, for example, is divided

New Zealand

into different districts ; let us say City, Ponsonby, Grafton, Parnell, and Suburbs. *A man must play for the district he resides in.* This has had the effect of breaking up many clubs. If, for instance, every Blackheath and Richmond player who resides out of the district in which his club's ground is situated were barred, these famous clubs would, I am afraid, not be able to raise very strong teams. Also, of course, any club not included in the district scheme could not compete in the leading matches.

This has led to the dispersal of many fine clubs which were formed of old schoolfellows and college chums, but on the whole, although the arrangement has lowered the social tone of the game, it has undoubtedly improved the standard of play.

All that is required to put a boy into the best football team in New Zealand is that he shall play well enough, be he the son of a knight or a night-porter. That is the pure democracy of sport.

The smallest boys play "rugger" with great spirit. Their masters generally know the game, and take an interest in them, and so they grow up with the ball in their laps. The climate is, of course, particularly suitable for the game.

Cricket is played a good deal in New Zealand, but, generally speaking, the centres of population suffer from a scarcity of good grounds, and particularly of good practice wickets. There is a very ignorant idea that is prevalent with groundmen, and with some

Athletic Sports in New Zealand

cricketers, that quite an inferior kind of pitch is good enough to practise on. There could be no greater fallacy. The practice pitch is of almost more importance than the match wicket. One forms one's habits on it. The consequence is that New Zealanders do not now shine as cricketers. Also it must be remembered that they cannot, or, at least, do not, train at night in large halls, as do the New Zealand footballers, and they lack good ground bowlers.

Association football is gradually getting a hold in the Dominion, but generally it is rather looked down on. It is by some called the refuge for old Rugby players who are beyond the real game. Hockey is increasing very much in popularity, as indeed it is in England. Lacrosse is also played a good deal, but there are so many other games in competition with it that it does not make much headway.

The girls of New Zealand have taken to hockey very keenly, and now nearly every girls' college has its teams, and the intercollege matches are always contested with the keenest rivalry before very enthusiastic galleries.

Bowls has obtained a wonderful hold, and not the least remarkable feature of its great popularity is the large number of young men who have played other games that are joining the ranks of the "biassed." Many of them have years of golf or lawn-tennis in them, and I cannot understand them, good game as bowls undoubtedly is, taking to it until they have been given up by the other games. Once upon a time I

New Zealand

bowled for a season myself, so am not speaking without an intimate knowledge of the game. Bowls is really a better game than most people think. I have many years of golf, lawn-tennis, cycling, shooting, and so on to go through before I become a bowler, but I can go on to a green and spend a day most pleasantly. It is a mistake to think that only those who are driven to it bowl. It has two great advantages : it is a very cheap game, and a very sociable one.

Bowls is a splendid game for ladies and children. There is only wanted one innovation to more than double the popularity of bowls, and to cause ladies' clubs, or mixed clubs, to spring up all over the place. The green should be raised a foot or eighteen inches. Instead of playing off the mat the ladies would bowl from a lower level, as though delivering the bowl along a table, thus avoiding the excessive stooping. There is no pastime so suitable for ladies who do not want severe exercise, and bowling-greens constructed on these lines, with, of course, a ditch in the usual place, and also, if necessary, a collapsible bank, would soon become very popular at country houses.

Lawn-tennis is very popular throughout New Zealand, and the game is very well played indeed. One of the holders of the Men's Doubles Championship of England is a New Zealander, and there are many players in the Dominion who, given his chances, would easily equal, if not excel, his record. I do not say this lightly, but so that others who may think the big things

Athletic Sports in New Zealand

of the world beyond their grasp may be encouraged to try for them. I know two New Zealand players whose names are scarcely known beyond their own country, and who are utterly unknown in the only place that makes fame, London, who with careful coaching would have beaten England's best as certainly as that night follows day. Again, let me say that it must not be thought that I am exaggerating the ability of my own countrymen. Those who follow lawn-tennis will know that I have never depreciated English play and extolled Australasian without having my judgment thoroughly confirmed by results. Those who have not so followed the game can easily verify my statements by consulting the standard works.

The matter is a little more important than it seems, for all her children who live far from Old England see her and her people through the glamour of love and distance, and their focus is wrong. They, strange to say, almost invariably underrate their strength and ability. This sometimes, in fact very often, discourages young people who might have quite a good chance of succeeding in the only place that counts—again, London.

Quite a remarkable instance of this was the visit of the famous All Blacks, the greatest team of Rugby footballers that ever was. Many shrewd judges of Rugby football mistrusted their ability to succeed. Were they not going to play in England against English Rugby footballers? How could they win?

New Zealand

I went with a friend to see an international match some years before the All Blacks arrived.

"What do you think of it?" he asked.

"Is this about the best you have here?" I asked.

"Yes," he said. "How would your chaps get on with them?"

"Frankly, I don't think they have anything to learn from this class of football," was my answer; but even then I was in no way prepared for the overwhelming nature of their victories. I ought to have known. My focus was wrong. So in many cases the wrong focus deters one, who might not otherwise be deterred, from trying his fortune, and helping to prove that the standard of intellect or physique, or both, of his little "nation" is equal to surviving the battle of the fittest that rages continually at the heart of the world.

Polo has quite a good footing throughout New Zealand. Here, as elsewhere, on account of its expense, it is naturally confined to a much smaller number. The ponies are frequently of the best class, and often very well trained. They are very cheap compared with ponies in England, and the difference in price is not represented by a corresponding difference in form. There are some first-class country teams in New Zealand, made up of men who almost live in the saddle. Many of these would not cause New Zealand shame at Ranelagh or Hurlingham.

Yachting is very popular in New Zealand, and both sexes join freely in this fascinating pastime, for which

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the coast is in many places particularly favourable. The Hauraki Gulf and adjacent coastline are without doubt New Zealand's finest cruising-ground. It is doubtful if there is one to beat it in the world for all-round advantages. There are hundreds of miles of seaboard, dotted here and there with beautiful islands, and carved into sheltering bays and harbours teeming with fish of all sorts, and the weather seems almost made for the yachtsman. Verily for the man who can be content with Nature, for the most part unadorned, New Zealand is the place.

Like all other sport in New Zealand, yachting is, comparatively speaking, very cheap. In their holidays it is not uncommon for young clerks and others to band together and go away on a fortnight's cruise. It is wonderful how little it can be done for when money is an object, as it not infrequently is, even in New Zealand.

Golf has, as it deserves, a great hold on New Zealand, and it is increasing in popularity rapidly. The game here, as elsewhere, is confined principally to the upper classes. The play is, of course, not of so high a standard as obtains in England, for in New Zealand there is practically no leisured class, but, making due allowance for the advantages of the English golfers in this respect, I think that there is in New Zealand material that, with a little finishing off, would put its name as high up in the golfing world as Australasia has already done in the lawn-tennis. When I say this it is, of course, a mere expression of opinion, but I should not

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say it unless I meant it. It will be remembered that in 1904, in "Modern Lawn-Tennis," I said very much the same of the lawn-tennis players. My prophecy was received with incredulity, almost with amusement, at the time, but it was not long ere it was more than fully realized. The fact is that the oversea Briton, wherever you catch him, can play anything well. He could do it before he or his father left the dear old land, and I cannot see why a freer, better, more natural life should tend to decrease his powers. In all but the matter of leisure and money he has the advantage of his stay-at-home brethren, and he is starting now to get his share of that. The result is that we now have a very large percentage of the world's championships held by the dependencies of England.

The golf links of New Zealand are very picturesque and well laid out. It would be hard to find a more beautiful and sporting course than that of the Auckland Golf Club laid out on the slopes of the extinct volcano Maungakiekie, now fortunately quite quiet, and—not so fortunately—going by the commonplace name of One Tree Hill.

There are two holes that come into my mind as I write. The one is Jacob's Ladder. I forget its number. To the green is a mashie shot, but to get there you have a carry that is not quite perpendicular, and the side of the hill is a series of terraces used in old days for fortifications by the Maori. If you get on to one of these "steps" up against the Ladder you will take

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more than three. If you play your shot well you can scramble up the narrow path, and earn your reward by chipping a stroke off bogey. Be a little too strong, and you will be into some old disused potato-pits, more relics of Maori occupation, and here you may find trouble. They are grass-grown and soft under foot now, with a fine velvety sward that sheep keep always close to the red volcanic soil, but your chance of troubling the colonel has gone.

The tee at the hole playing down to the club-house stands at one end of a huge elliptical crater or natural stadium with one end blown out. There, beyond the jaws of this gigantic horseshoe, is the green. Away in the distance lies the lovely stretch of the Manukau Harbour and the ocean, but you are intent on your ball. You tee up and smite it truly. It hisses away into the air, if you hit it as Taylor does, for nearly 200 yards, then seems to hold itself together for a sudden plunge of nearly 100 yards. It is a great hole. The rest is simple, but as a spectacular drive and a beautiful hole this one will take "quite a little" beating, as the American says when he means a lot.

CHAPTER VI

SHOOTING AND FISHING

VERY few Englishmen have any idea of the opportunities offered the sportsman in New Zealand. The Dominion is, by reason of its climatic and other natural

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advantages, especially fitted for the enjoyment of a great number of different sports under the very best and cheapest conditions. Year by year these facts are becoming better known, and in consequence sportsmen from all parts of the world are making the journey in order to enjoy the fine deer-stalking and wonderful fishing that may be had there.

The streams and lakes probably cannot be surpassed, while the evergreen forests are the admiration of all who see them, and especially of those who, like myself, have had the pleasure of living and hunting in them. The Government of New Zealand is progressive in other matters than legislation. It has already realized that in years to come its territory will be recognized as the sportsman's paradise—as it undoubtedly is. It knows that its rivers and lakes, its trout-streams and forests, its deer and goats and pigs, are a valuable asset, and it is taking every care of them, and sparing neither money nor pains in the effort to improve them. It knows what an attraction sport is to the Briton, and it is doing its best to encourage him.

It has already dealt with the acclimatization of fish in a very thorough manner. Rainbow, Loch Leven, brown, and American trout have been introduced. They have taken very kindly to their new home, and may now be caught in almost any of the innumerable lakes, rivers, and streams in that abundantly and beautifully watered country.

The fishing season lasts from October to April. In

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one season that I remember there were caught rod-fishing in Lakes Rotorua and Rotoiti and the connecting creek 6,952 trout, weighing over 13 tons 13 hundred-weight, and averaging $4\frac{1}{2}$ pounds each. There was probably quite a third as many again not brought in to be weighed. The largest trout caught in the season mentioned was $20\frac{1}{2}$ pounds. The fish were taken from the bank wading, or trolling (chiefly with artificial minnow) from a boat, Maori canoe, or oil launch.*

New Zealand is now in many places well stocked with fine game, deer especially being very plentiful. In 1862 the late Prince Consort sent some of the Windsor Park red deer to New Zealand. It took them seven months to get there! Three survived the long voyage that is now accomplished in six weeks. They were two hinds and one stag, which were liberated near Wellington. To-day their descendants are numbered by many thousands. Their antlers are exceptionally good, and the British stalker who goes there instead of to Scotland will not have cause to regret his decision. They have now spread all over New Zealand. Fallow buck were introduced, and they have multiplied so rapidly that in some parts they are shot without restriction. Sambar, or Ceylon elk, are also thriving there. A few years ago moose were introduced, and the Duke of Bedford presented the New Zealand

* The largest brown trout that I can call to mind which was caught in New Zealand scaled 37 pounds. Others have been caught weighing 34, 30, and 28.

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Government with some Japanese deer and thar. These have multiplied rapidly, and give promise of being a valuable addition to New Zealand game. Wapiti (or elk), Virginian deer, and mule deer, have also been imported.

Wild pigs and wild goats abound in many parts of the Dominion. They furnish excellent sport, the goats requiring careful stalking. The wild pigs provide good sport. They are hunted with dogs, and generally shot. Many boys enjoy this form of sport. They frequently form camps, pitching their tents in or near the bush, and hunting from day to day. It is desirable to erect a stout palisading 2 or 3 feet in height round the tent, otherwise the pigs will come into it at night, or when one is away in the daytime, especially if one should be without dogs, and cause much damage.

Rabbits abound in New Zealand, and are shot without restriction—indeed, in some parts of the colony they are a pest. Hares also are plentiful, and of great size. They provide good sport with gun or dog, shooting or coursing, and in New Zealand they are the substitute for the fox, which has not been introduced there. Wild cattle are fairly plentiful in some places, and on the plains are many wild horses. These and the pigs and goats are all descended from imported animals. They have at various times strayed away, and taken to the bush, the mountain, or the plain.

In New Zealand the pheasant is the king of game-birds. There he really is a game-bird, and not, as in

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England, a fat, hand-fed degenerate who is not many degrees above a barn-door fowl. He has to rustle for his living from his infancy, and there is no hand-feeding for him. In consequence, he is fast and strong, and of beautiful plumage. He finds his living in the bush, and occasionally levies toll on the farmer; but his flesh has in it the spice of the woodland berry, and is as far ahead of the English pheasant in flavour as are the English fish ahead of the New Zealand.

In New Zealand there is no shooting from camp-stools at clouds of fat birds driven up to you. There you have to go and find your game, so you take your gun and sling your bag across your shoulder, and set out with your dog or dogs. You may be in for a thirty-mile tramp, but you will get a bag, as much as you want to carry, and you will enjoy seeing your dogs work and following them. You will not require a butcher's cart to carry home your bag, but if you are a true sportsman you would sooner have it so. Sometimes I wonder how people can call pheasant-shooting in England sport. This is the only *real* way to shoot pheasants, and when you do it like this you have no use for the camp-stool.

I was much amused the other day to see an article entitled "Dogging Pheasants." It was in a London daily paper. Thinking, perhaps, that it might be something fresh, I read it. When I had finished, I found that it meant just what we call "shooting pheasants," but it described with much detail how good it was to

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“dog” the pheasants. That in New Zealand would be a ridiculous term. With us the dog is just part of the thing—the real thing. We no more talk of “dogging pheasants” than we do of “mixed bathing.” We do both quite naturally, and don’t think of them by special names, for we have always found them convenient and pleasant.

Duck-shooting in New Zealand is a delightful sport. The lakes and rivers swarm with birds. There are grey duck, mallard, and teal in countless swarms, while more recently have been added canvas-backs, wigeon, black, pintails, wood, and mandarins. There are black swans, Canada geese, snow geese, Hutchins, and white-fronted geese. These are multiplying at an incredible rate, and it is rare indeed to go away duck-shooting without getting good sport.

Away on the New Zealand lakes, far away from telegraph and telephone, newspapers and publishers, one feels at perfect peace. The air is delightful, and one is always hungry. Generally one pitches camp and lives in a tent. When I go away it is usually with a party of four, and each of us has a Maori, who paddles his canoe and does most of the work.

The canoes are not very substantial things. They are hollowed out of a tree in one piece. They lie very low to the water, not showing amidship more than a few inches of “free board.” One cannot stand up and “play about” in them. The Maori sits in the stern and propels it with one paddle, a quaint thing shaped

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like a broad spear. The sportsman sits on a few boughs of ti-tree put in the bottom about midships, his back against a stick lashed across from gunwale to gunwale. He thus makes a letter L in shape, and until one is accustomed to it this is not the most comfortable attitude. However, it is not long before one becomes quite used to it.

You coast round the shore looking for game, or perchance you put down your decoys and draw the canoe into the raupo (a reed) swamp, and wait until the ducks come down to them. At other times, donning the waders, you select a place where the birds are in the habit of flying over, and concealing yourself in the reeds, you generally do well.

In these swamps are many pukeko, the New Zealand swamp-hen, a bird of slow and heavy flight. It makes a delicious soup, and when not too old its flesh is very good, and perfectly white and tender. Afterwards it becomes darker in colour, and not so pleasant.

I must not forget to mention the pigeon. It is very easy to kill, and year by year is retreating farther from civilization, for it is ruthlessly slaughtered wherever it can be got at. It is a delicious table bird, and of great size.

Of fishing in New Zealand there is so much to be said that it would take a volume to do it justice. I have already spoken of the grand trout-fishing that is to be had. Line-fishing gives much excellent sport. There is abundance of schnapper, king-fish, hapuka (or

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groper), and many others too numerous to mention. The king-fish and groper are fish of immense size. It is not uncommon for them to weigh 100 pounds. Some people think the king-fish almost as good sport as the tarpon. If you should happen to hook a really large one you will need a good stout line, and plenty of it. Their flesh is very good.

We sometimes harpoon them from the rocks or a wharf, and at other times shoot them with a rifle ; but this is rather disappointing, for, unless you are on to them like a flash, they sink, and you lose them. I saw a smart bit of work done in this connection once. A New Zealand boy of fifteen years of age had the rifle, and was on a cattle-wharf watching for the fish to pass under. He was up on the top of the cattle-stops 8 feet off the wharf. Suddenly a great king-fish darted under. There was a report, a flash of white, and a track of blood-stained foam as the wounded fish lashed the water for a moment. Simultaneously there was a thud as the rifle dropped butt first on the wharf, and another splash as the keen young sportsman landed fairly on the great fish's back. Then there was a swirling of the waters, until I backed in to him and hauled the struggling fish in, while the rifleman clambered in with scratched arms and soaked to the skin, but very pleased with himself for saving his prey from sinking.

I have spoken of the superior flavour of the English fish. This is very marked, but in one at least New



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Zealand is an easy first, and that is whitebait. Especially as compared with what is called whitebait in England, this is an absolute delicacy. Whitebait in England seems to be an assortment of young fish of various kinds, and occasionally I have found on my plate something approaching a sprat. The whitebait in New Zealand is a small eel-like thing the same girth all the way, and perhaps a little stouter than an ordinary 2-inch nail, and not much longer. Its flesh is quite white when cooked, and when raw it is almost transparent. It fits together in a basin into an almost solid mass, so nearly approaching a gelatinous condition does it seem to be. English epicures should try to obtain some. It should come home quite well in a frozen or chilled state, I should think, and I have heard that now it is being tinned.

Although the flavour of the English fish is undoubtedly better than ours, we have many excellent fish ; and hard indeed to satisfy will be the man who cannot enjoy a fried or grilled flounder or flat-fish, a good mullet, or indeed a schnapper, while a cutlet of king-fish is nearly as good as a bit of fine rump-steak.

Probably New Zealand is the only place in the world where whales are caught in nets. This is done at Whangamumu, about eighty miles north of Auckland, by two brothers named Cook, who are most intrepid whalers. At a certain season of the year the whales come up the coast. They frequently pass close in to the shore, and between it and a small island some dis-

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tance out. The ingenious whalers stretch a cable from the shore to the island. On this they hang great nets made of stout wire rope. The nets hang like blankets pegged on a clothes-line, with this exception—they are fastened to the cable by rope instead of being hung over it. Casks full of chopped cork are attached, to act as floats. The cork has to be cut and rammed tight, as, when hollow barrels were used, it was found that the whales, when sounding, went so deep that the barrels were crushed by the pressure of the water.

The unsuspecting whale swims into the net, which wraps itself round him. His struggles tear the net away from the cable, and wind it yet more securely, for he never thinks of “backing water,” and so getting away from his trap. It is now easy for the whalers to approach and harpoon him.

One of the brothers had an exciting experience once. He had harpooned a whale, which immediately “sounded,” or went down. The line was running out rapidly, when Cook’s leg was caught in a bight of it. In a flash he was over and going down, down, down at the tail of a sounding whale. Suddenly there was a slackening of the strain. Instantly the rope slipped off, and a few moments later, dazed and breathless, the young whaler came to the surface, and was hauled into the boat by his comrades, none the worse for his unpleasant experience. It was all over in a few seconds, but Cook says it was quite long enough for him.

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Now they have a steam-launch fitted with a whale-gun, so that they are enabled to go out after whales that would have been beyond their reach with an ordinary whaleboat, and to bring them back in much worse weather than they could have done formerly.

CHAPTER VII

THE CITIES OF NEW ZEALAND

SOME of the cities of New Zealand are very beautiful—by Nature. To be perfectly frank, they have not much to thank man for. Perhaps he will later on remove this reproach.

It would be hard, indeed, to imagine a town more beautifully situated than is Auckland. It stands on the shore of the famous Waitemata Harbour, one of the grandest and most picturesque havens in the world. It is well worthy to be mentioned with Rio, Sydney Harbour, and Milford Haven.

The harbour has numerous beautiful bays, whose beaches are strewn with tawny-yellow sand and shells that contrast strikingly with the rolling, verdure-clad hills behind. A few miles away stands Mount Eden, the great extinct volcano, from whose summit a peerless view from side to side of the island may be had. At the entrance to the harbour stands the wonderful slate-grey volcanic cone, the same shape wherever you see it, Rangitoto, “the mountain of the bloody sky,” as the

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Maori* call it. Beyond Rangitoto stretches the island-studded Hauraki Gulf, perhaps the most ideal cruising and fishing ground in the world. Here you may sail for scores of miles practically out in the ocean, yet with a good harbour always within reach.

Should you care to extend your voyage, as many of the Auckland yachtsmen do, for hundreds of miles you may coast along the shores until you reach the northernmost point of New Zealand, and everywhere you will find good anchorage and open-handed hospitality.

Auckland has a population of about 100,000 people. It is a busy, thriving little place, with a fine electric-tram service. It is an exceedingly pleasant place as a residential city, perhaps the pleasantest in New Zealand.

From an English point of view the town itself would not be considered attractive. There are practically no buildings with any claim to architectural beauty, and the city recently spent many thousands of pounds in building a Town Hall shaped like a distorted flat-iron, and modelled on the design for the Brixton municipal offices! Unfortunately, the worthy mayor and councillors do not seem to have been well advised in this matter.

The architects of the Brixton building did the best that could be done with an awkward site, but the folly of deliberately choosing a three-cornered site is in-

* Maori is the proper plural, although in New Zealand it is usual to employ the ordinary English plural.

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conceivable. Lord Plunket recently said that New Zealand architecture is contemptible. I am afraid this will not cause him to alter his opinion. It is unfortunate that in many cases the power to influence the spending of public money is in the hands of persons without artistic instinct or experience. Thus, in many cases money that ought to be used to render a city more useful and beautiful is frequently misapplied. In time let us hope a sense of refinement and artistic taste will be evolved that will prevent such uncanny things being done.

Wellington, the capital of New Zealand, is on Cook's Straits. It is a progressive, well-managed town, and a fine business centre. Its chief drawback is its hilliness, but as the country round about it is opened up by train and tram, this bar to its extension is being less keenly felt.

Port Nicholson is the harbour on the shores of which Wellington is built. It is a fine haven, and a very busy distributing centre.

Christchurch is the most English of New Zealand towns. Its port is Lyttelton, and the city itself is some few miles inland. Christchurch is perfectly flat, and would be rather uninteresting were it not for the picturesque little River Avon that winds about it. Wherever one goes one catches pretty glimpses of the little stream and its numerous bridges.

It is years since I was in Dunedin. I have many pleasant recollections of it. It was at the Boys' High

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School there, probably the finest college in New Zealand, that I obtained the foundation of my education. Dunedin is the Scotch town of New Zealand. Ay, and a solid place it is too, a good business town, and a picturesque city, with its Town Belt studded with villas for a background. New Plymouth is on the West Coast of the North Island. It suffers under the disability of being an open roadstead, and at times there are some lively storms there. They have, however, built a fine breakwater, and this has proved a boon to shipping.

Napier is on the East Coast of the North Island. It is a very picturesque town. It has a good population, and a splendid back-country behind it. Here are some of the finest sheep-“fams” in the Dominion, the owners of which are almost entitled to be called “wool kings” instead of sheep-“fammers.”

Nearly all the cities of New Zealand are well drained and clean in all respects. Their water-supplies are all good, and generally there is not much that is necessary for the comfort of the inhabitant or the visitor that is overlooked. Indeed, it is recognized in the Dominion that the visitor is a man of importance, and so he receives every consideration in the way of low fares and any other conveniences that can be granted him.

There has always been a large amount of tourist traffic in New Zealand. This is being wisely encouraged and dealt with by the Government, which has opened a tourist department of its own. This has now

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been in operation for some years, and has been found of very great service to travellers.

Nelson, in Marlborough, on the southern side of Cook's Straits, is a sweet little town ; in summer a veritable orchard. It is years since I was there, but I shall never forget its picturesque beauty.

CHAPTER VIII

HUNTING AND RACING

THE New Zealanders are very fond of the horse, as indeed, considering their ancestry and the nature of their life, is only natural. Horses are cheap, and in the main good. A good boy's pony will cost but a few pounds. They are not reared so carefully as they are here, nor are they broken or trained so thoroughly. They are therefore at times inclined to do unexpected things, but the young New Zealander takes that "as read," for he himself is "built on similar lines."

Quite a large proportion of both boys and girls ride, and many of them ride very well. The girls have for years past been gradually taking to riding astride, which is a very sensible idea. It is becoming much more common in England now. For about seven years past some of our most daring lady riders in the show-ring and across country have adopted this seat with conspicuous success, and it is often seen in the street.

In their own particular work the riders of New

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Zealand, the stockmen, and those whose work keeps them in the saddle day in and day out, will compare favourably with any in the world. Some of them are wonderfully clever. On the whole they are a fairly steady lot of fellows, but some of them would really beat the world for their capacity to carry whisky and ride straight.

Once I had to go from a country railway-station to a place about fifteen miles away from it. I had written for the people at the hotel to have a horse ready for me. When I got there I found that my letter had gone astray, and that I could not get a horse for an hour or two. Every horse within miles was away at a neighbouring race-meeting some seven miles away. It was sunset. I started away walking at once. I had not gone a quarter of a mile before a stockman, more or less jovially inclined, overtook me. He was leading a saddle-horse. I immediately hailed him, and suggested that I should ride the spare horse. He fell in with the idea at once. As luck would have it, he was going a mile or so past where I wanted to go. We set off. He was so merry that once when he got down to pick up his whip, which he had dropped, he fell beside it in the road. His pony knew him, and stood like a rock.

"Do you want a hand up?" I asked.

"Oh no," he said. "Wait till I get hold of his leg."

He crawled round, much to my amusement, got hold of the pony's foreleg, and pulled himself up by it until he got hold of the pommel of the saddle and the



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stirrup. Then he was another man. He swung himself into the saddle, and we were off again through the inky darkness at full gallop. He would lie back until his head was almost on his horse's quarters, and then swing easily into his seat again. He never got into trouble when he was drunk, he told me, unless he started "fooling with the fences."

If I didn't gallop fast enough he laid his coiled stock-whip over my poor old grey's quarters. It was on grass and fairly big, so I was ashamed of the pace we were making. At each village we clattered through he left a trail of yells and compliments behind him, and called to me to join in. In those days I was younger and more frivolous, and anyway it was easier to yell than to annoy him, and perhaps have to waste time "arguing the question," so I am afraid I suited my manners to my company—as we do in New Zealand.

We were off the metal once, galloping at full speed down a side-road, when my horse jumped upwards and sideways, and nearly left me below. With a yell and an oath he was after me. We had all but galloped into a dray without lights going noiselessly on the clay road in the same direction as we were. Without an instant's pause he dug his spurs in, and away we went. It was a rough road covered with loose stones, and it was pitch dark. In the daytime I should not have ridden it like this, but someone was waiting for me whom I was anxious to see quickly, and it wasn't my horse, so I just entered into the spirit of the thing, and let him go.

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We stopped twice for my friend to refresh himself, but the journey was soon over. As I handed him the bridle I was ashamed to see dark patches forming themselves in the roadway at the hoofs of my steaming grey. It was running off him in cupfuls. My merry friend looked at it too. We were standing in the dull light of a country hotel. Then he looked at his hardy little stock-horse, which had scarcely turned a hair. "Grass," he said, jerking his thumb at my big grey; "corn," patting the neck of his low-raking little skewbald; and with a cheery "Good-night" he was off into the darkness again, clattering over the rough dark road with the most perfect careless confidence. It is wonderful how many of these men take their lives in their hands day in and night out, and how few of them come to grief, but they are in many cases, as in this one, born horsemen, and more at home in the saddle than on foot.

Hunting in New Zealand is not quite the same thing as it is in England. To begin with, we have no foxes, so we make shift with hares or a drag. We have imported stoats and weasels, so I do not see why we should hesitate about foxes.

There is no regulation hunting-dress in New Zealand. At most meets men turn up just as they please—most of them in tweed suits, riding-breeches and gaiters, and caps. The huntsman and whipper-in may sport their "regimentals," but probably they will be the only bits of colour in the picture.

There is no unnecessary show about the dress either

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of the men or the ladies—in fact, they dress much as they would if just out for an ordinary ride. The horses are very good, and they can jump. It would make the heart of many a fine rider in England stop beating to see a New Zealand field stream away after a strong hare—and they are strong and fast out there—across a barbed-wire fence. They are ghastly things to look at—4 feet 6 inches and more of bare barbed wire, five or six wires at times; truly a lovely jump. They are strained like a violin-string to solid posts about 5 feet high and, say, 12 feet apart. There is no brushing or glancing over these. They are not made to be touched, yet no rider who hopes to be considered a hunting man thinks of “turning it up” at wire any more than his horse does. They stream over it, and the horses know it too; they know it is the game to “give it a miss,” and they do, too, in the enormous majority of cases; in fact, considering the prevalence of wire in New Zealand, it is really remarkable how few accidents there are from it.

Many of the horses have some of the best blood in the world in them from imported sires and mares, and they are reared and kept under very natural conditions. In New Zealand a hunter may have the run of a small field, or “paddock,” as we call it there, during the week, and only be hunted on Saturday. Of course, he has plenty of oats, and frequently, too, he will have some exercise during the week, but it is very rare for a horse to be hunted more than twice a week in New Zealand, and

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much more frequently it is once, and the amount of exercise he gets during the week beyond running about his paddock is often very little. Yet it is wonderful what such horses can accomplish. On the other hand, some keep their horses in the very finest condition, and give them an amount of attention little less than that bestowed on them in England.

Racing in New Zealand is very well conducted, and the class of horse that races there will compare favourably with anything in the world. All flesh is grass, and the best grass is in England. That is why she produces the best cattle and horses—and men—in the world. New Zealand grass is little, if at all, inferior to English.

The horses are extremely well bred, and the racing, from the point of view of the general public, is infinitely more enjoyable than in England. Here the “gate” is consistently neglected, and it is only comparatively recently that the powers that be have awakened to the fact that if the sport is to be kept alive the public must be considered.

England, in my opinion, is very backward in racing matters. New Zealand had the starting-machine years before it came in here. We also have the numbered saddle-cloth and the totalisator now, and we have removed the bookmaker from the courses. In about ten years England will follow suit.

The courses in New Zealand are very well laid out and well kept. Some of them are very fine. I do not know a more beautiful steeplechase course in the world

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than Ellerslie, at Auckland. I would sooner watch a selling steeplechase there than the Liverpool Grand National at Aintree, having seen it run once, when Moifaa, of New Zealand, won it from end to end.

The Ellerslie course is situated at the bottom of a vast natural, emerald-green amphitheatre, whose slopes are dotted with villa residences and trees. The big steeplechase is about four miles, and the horses have to go about three times round the course, and up and down a steep hill. They are never out of sight, and are always near enough for one to follow their colours. I was telling an Englishman about it once, and comparing with it the uninteresting nature of the Aintree course from a spectacular point of view. I shall never forget his answer. "Yes, that may be so," he said; "but then one is the Auckland Steeplechase Course, and the other is the Liverpool Grand National Course."

This expresses much more than this one comparison.

CHAPTER IX

THE THERMAL SPRINGS DISTRICT

It is perhaps wrong to say "the" thermal springs district, for there are many places in New Zealand where there is a considerable amount of thermal activity, but there can be no doubt that Rotorua and the surrounding country is entitled to the place of honour—indeed, most of the other places are limited

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to a few hot springs, with perhaps an occasional geyser or fumarole.

In New Zealand the word "geyser" is pronounced, as given in most dictionaries, "gyzer," not, as is common in England, "geezer."

Rotorua is the chief town of the thermal regions. It makes an ideal centre, and is in itself a charming place at which to spend a holiday. The public park comprises hundreds of acres of well-tended grounds, of which quite a large area is laid out in lawns, bowling-greens, and gardens.

Within a stone's-throw of the street spouting geysers of hot water throw their steaming jets aloft, to fall bubbling and hissing into cleverly fashioned ponds. A few yards farther on one comes to the magnificent bath-houses lately erected by the Government, which has within quite a short time spent close on £100,000 in beautifying and improving the bath-houses and grounds.

Here one may find a mineral bath which will cure or relieve almost anything. This sounds very much like the advertisement of a quack doctor, but nevertheless is literally true. The curative properties of the Rotorua baths are really marvellous. I remember once, when I was staying there, a cripple hobbled in on crutches. He was suffering severely from sciatica. I became quite friendly with him. In New Zealand, especially in the country, and if one is a good sort, this does not take so long as it does in England. I found

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that he was the champion half-mile runner of Australia, quite a noted athlete.

He took the hot sulphur baths, going down each day in a pony-carriage. Within three weeks he had cast his crutches away, and was a joyful man and sound again. Years afterwards I met him in Sydney, Australia, and asked him how his sciatica was. He laughed and said : " I cannot tell you. I left it at Rotorua, and it hasn't come back."

Whakarewarewa is a little settlement within a few minutes' drive of Rotorua. In New Zealand we do not hyphenate the name, and I shall not do so hereafter. Here is the famous Wairoa geyser that has given up spouting unless it is fed with a bar of soap ; then it spouts splendidly. It is not soaped except for " distinguished " people. Many years ago I was there, and wanted to see it spout by moonlight, so I crossed an old Maori's palm with something bright, and wandered up in the evening. I came to a large stone close by the sullen steaming cauldron. There I found a bar of soap cut into nice little cubes. It is not necessary to confess what I did with it, but almost before I had retreated to a safe distance there was a roar and a rush, and a spluttering, foaming, frothy mass of troubled water flew up into the air, while fleecy clouds rolled away from the shining silvery cascade that fell in beautiful waterfalls, hissing on the rocks. This delightful exhibition continued for six or seven minutes. Then we went home with the consciousness of having

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done a good deed well—and by a short cut, for fear of meeting the keeper.

There are mud-baths and oil-baths at Whakarewarewa, which is generally in the district called “Whaka,” pronounced “wocker,” although it should not be, for Maori *wh* is sounded something like Paddy’s *wh* in “phwat.” Here also one may see little hot-springs boiling up in a cold creek.

In many places in Rotorua there are steam-holes in the grounds of private property. In England this would not be looked on as a desirable acquisition. It might be considered that the connection with the lower regions was becoming too intimate. The inhabitant of Rotorua has no such idea. He uses it to cook his food. He may deposit his dinner in it, and cover it up with a sack, going away knowing full well that it will be “cooked to a turn” when he comes home, even if he should be an hour late.

Quite close to Rotorua is the interesting little native village of Ohinemutu. It is well to be careful, going home at nights in this place, for the gutters are little hot-water creeks; but not really hot enough to scald one.

A few miles from Rotorua there are the famous mud-springs of Tikitere, gruesome great bubbling “porridge-pots,” as they are called. Their resemblance in action to a pot of thick oatmeal-porridge boiling is perfect, except that the bubbling is not so active. There is something eerily malevolent in its sullen slowness.



WAIROA GEYSER.

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Lake Rotorua is a beautiful sheet of water, and there are many places of interest to be visited by boat. Of these, perhaps Hinemoa's bath, a little hot-spring nestling on a tiny islet, and Hamurana spring, are the most worthy of mention. The latter really is a scene of extraordinary beauty. From the still blue waters of the lake you glide beneath a canopy of weeping-willow trees into a shallow, crystal-clear stream of fresh water. The bed of the creek is a delicate tint of blue, curiously mottled here and there with patches of tawny yellow. When lit up with the filtering rays of the sun, it is a fascinating picture. It is not far to the head of the creek. Here you come up against a solid wall of rock, and, looking down, you see that the creek is swirling up in a column of crystal-clear icy water from the bowels of the earth.

You are invited to throw a penny in. You do so, and are surprised to find that so great is the force of the current that the coin cannot sink. It slides from side to side, until at last it is buffeted out of the current, and rests on the rocky ledges at the side of this great spring, whence, later on, it is rescued by the Maori. It is on record that once a tourist, being short of other coins, threw in a sovereign. Can you guess his nationality?

Waiotapu is another beautiful and interesting spot. It is about twenty miles from Rotorua, half-way on the road to Taupo. Here was the giant geyser Waimangu, probably the greatest in the world. Unfortunately,

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it has now ceased. When it was playing it used to throw a quarter of an acre of mud and stones 1,000 feet in height, and its canopy of steam would probably extend another thousand. One day a man and a young girl stayed too close to it during an eruption, and paid the penalty. They were overwhelmed and killed.

Here is the champagne pool. It is a shallow pool of many yards in circumference contained within silicated rims of a few inches in height. It is always still until one picks up a handful of the loose sand lying about and scatters it on the surface. Then instantly it creams all over just as a glass of champagne that is being poured out. The coaches and motors stop at Waiotapu for lunch. It makes a pleasant break in the day's journey, and the tourists are always well looked after here.

The Wairakei Valley is perhaps the gem of the Auckland thermal regions, if not, indeed, of the world. Here one finds every kind of thermal mystery and beauty. Here are feathery geysers, the Prince of Wales's feathers, well named; the dragon's mouth, through which foolish people, myself included, walk between the eruptions of boiling mineral water; miniature terraces; the electric pool, a great blue recurring bubble; and many other wonders. At the Spa, a mile or two away, is a fine geyser called the Crow's Nest. One of my friends was in the Nest between eruptions. He didn't get out quickly enough. He nursed a parboiled leg for a fortnight.

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Perhaps the finest sight in the famous valley is the Champagne Cauldron. Calmly this pool lies, smooth as smooth may be, and bluer than the bluest sky, when without warning it begins to "cream" as a gigantic glass of champagne, to foam, to rise, and with a mighty upward heave the waters of the lakelet rise in a foaming, boiling mass of snowy froth, and pour forth and away down over the yellow silicated and terraced bed of the "creek" in miniature cascades, which run down the golden staircase in foaming masses of virgin purity; while upwards to the ruddy cliff above roll the soft white clouds of steam, and hang on its surface and caress the ferns with moist, warm touch that keeps them tender and delicately green, so that the contrast of yellow terrace and blue pool, with the dull red earth and pea-green ferns for a background, must be seen for one to be able to experience the full delight of gazing at one alone of many of the lovely sights of this wonderful region.

Thousands of people, some from the uttermost ends of the earth, annually view the wonders and beauties of this district, but others have only a dim idea of the nature of the country. There is no uneasiness felt by those who reside so close to the mighty forces of Nature. The only volcanic action of any extent was the famous Tarawera eruption, during which the beautiful pink and white terraces were destroyed.

This was an irreparable loss, but there is still enough of weird beauty and natural marvel in and around

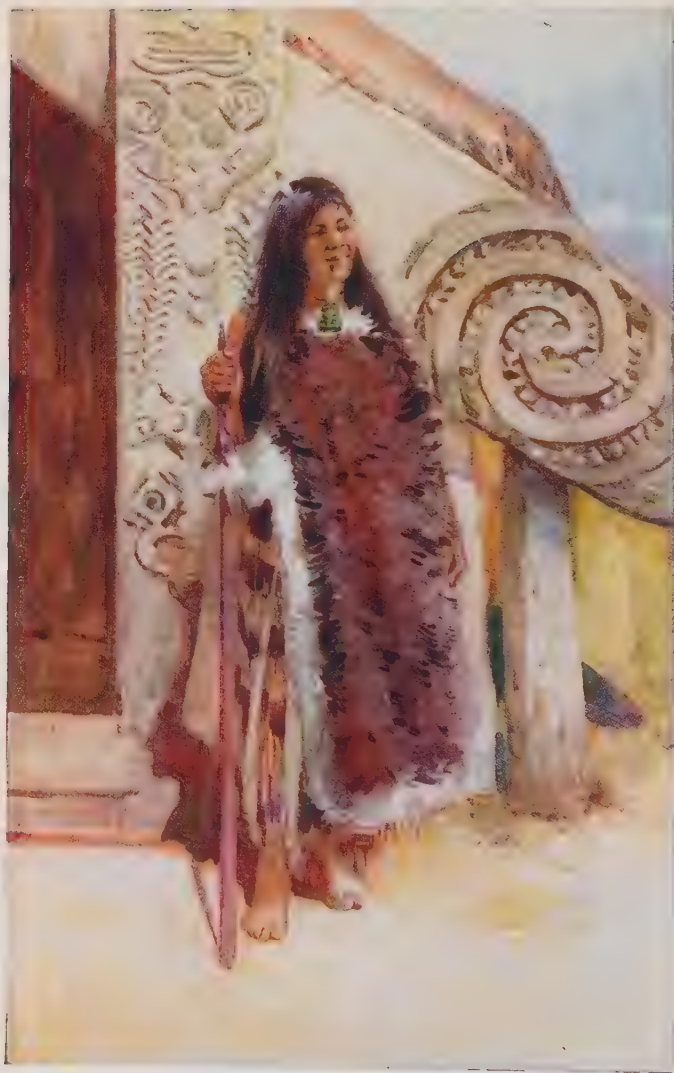
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Rotorua to make it one of the world's wonders—one that will increase in attractiveness as the years go on, and its fame both as a tourist resort and a health-giver becomes better known, as indeed it must if the Government continues its wise policy of development, and uses the means at its disposal to make it known in England.

The waters of many of the mineral springs are heavily charged with silica. The Maori often put flax kits and other articles in a pool. In quite a short time they have a beautiful coating of silica of varying hues. If allowed time, the coating will stiffen anything put in, so that it becomes almost as rigid as stone, a kind of surface petrification.

Summer at Rotorua is a delightful experience. When one is tired of lake trips and seeing mountains, springs, and geysers, one may idle about the beautiful Sanatorium grounds or play tennis, golf, or bowls until pleasantly tired, then jump into a hot swimming-bath, with, if desired, a cold shower to follow. So invigorating and refreshing are the baths that he will probably want to start "all over again" if there is enough daylight left.

In the thermal springs district many of the streams, or creeks, as they are called in New Zealand, are hot. At Wairakei there is quite a large hot-water creek. This runs through the grounds of the fine hotel that stands at the entrance to the valley. The creek has been dammed up so that it forms a most beautiful



A MAORI CHIEFTAINESS.

The Thermal Springs District

natural hot swimming-bath. Here one may swim for scores of yards with the nikau and the tree-fern waving in the sunlight above him, screened by the tender green natural bush, drinking in the life of the warm water that laps its roots and pendulous branches. The natural forest is in New Zealand always called bush.

Rotorua is by no means New Zealand's one centre of thermal activity. At Hanmer, in the Middle Island, there is a well-known Sanatorium where many remarkable cures are effected.

Te Aroha, in the Auckland district, is only second to Rotorua, while there are hot-springs at Waiwera, Ohaeawai, and other places; while one of the best mineral waters in the world comes from Kamo, near Whangarei. This is a natural mineral water that would make Perrier quite jealous if it could be placed on the London market.

CHAPTER X

THE MAORI

THE Maori is a most interesting study. I have known him now for more years than I care to confess, and I like him. When the Pakeha, as he calls the white man, has not spoiled him he is a good fellow.

He is in the main a dweller in the country. The Government has looked after the Maori well. Scattered principally over the provincial district of Auck-

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land are huge tracts of native land that cannot be dealt with except after proceedings in the native land court, that are generally sufficient to stop business before it is half done.

A lot of nonsense has been written and talked about the Maori dying out. I do not think there is any indication of this coming to pass. On the whole they live happy, healthy, outdoor lives, and are fairly contented with their lot. It would be idle to protest that they are an industrious race, but I will answer for it that they are keen sportsmen, and good fellows to work on a sporting trip if one knows how to manage them.

They are children of Nature, and therein for me lies their charm. They have no *v* in their language, so cannot say my name. The nearest they can get is "Waera," and I am afraid it would shock many a one here who believes in preserving social distinction if he could hear the Maori who paddles my canoe for me, when I don't do it myself, calling me "Waera," and praising—or otherwise—my shooting.

There are about 50,000 Maori in New Zealand (rather more now, I think), and they own the enormous area of 7,000,000 acres of land, most of which is good. Much of it, of course, is vested in the tribes, and cannot be personally dealt with by the individual.

The Maori is a very intelligent fellow. He has a vote just the same as the Pakeha, and he sends members to the House of Parliament. One of them, who comes to my mind now, is a Master of Arts of the

The Maori

New Zealand University, a gentleman, a barrister, and a scholar. He is doing good work for his people.

The Maori is a strong and courageous fellow. He is often a good wrestler, generally a good shot, and, like all who live close to Nature, a keen observer. He will see the duck on the horizon before the Pakeha has dreamed of looking for it. If a wounded bird falls in the raupo swamp, where to the ordinary man one reed is exactly the same as the other, he will mark it down and bring it out like a retriever.

He is generally courteous and obliging, but I am afraid I must admit that he is often a bit "slim." This generally results from contact with the white man, for it stands to reason that not the best class of whites associate freely with the ordinary Maori who hang about the country towns.

A very good friend of mine, Mr. H. E. Partridge, of Auckland, who has a great admiration for the Maori, has for thirty years commissioned an Austrian artist, Herr Gottfried Lindauer, residing in New Zealand, to paint for him many prominent Maori chiefs and chieftainesses. He has now a splendid collection of these renowned Maori, many of whom are dead. The tattooing has been reproduced with marvellous fidelity, and the skin-tints of the Maori are most faithfully and artistically reproduced. Besides the portraits, he has also secured some very fine paintings of Maori life. I hope some day to be able to show the whole collection in London. A picture by the same artist was

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accepted by King Edward VII., when Prince of Wales. He was much struck by the work.

One picture impressed me very much. It is that of a Tohunga, or Maori priest, under "tapu." When the priest is "tapu" he may not touch food, so there is the old Tohunga kneeling down, with his hands behind him, while a little Maori girl is feeding him with a boiled potato, a genuine New Zealand flour-ball. "Tapu" is a wide term. Its usual interpretation is sacred. For instance, where Maori are buried is "tapu." A place where a man is supposed to have been drowned may be "tapu." The Maori is superstitious, and he gives anything "tapu" a wide berth.

In camp the Maori is a good fellow, particularly if the camp is on enjoyment bent, as I am afraid mine nearly always was. He is quick and ready at all bush work, willing to take his hand at cooking the dinner, washing up, attending to the game, looking after the fire, and all the little odd jobs about a camp that one always dodges when one can employ others to do them.

The Maori have many peculiar customs. When a member of a tribe dies they have what they call a "tangi." This corresponds to an Irish wake. If he is a great chief, a "rangatira," the "tangi" is a big one. A short time ago a big chief died in the Waikato. Maori gathered together from all parts. They came laden with sweet potatoes, corn, oatmeal, flour, pork, and what not. They stayed, and kept that "tangi" going so long as the "kai," or food, held out. Then



A PATAKA.



The Maori

they melted away, and returned to the places whence they came.

They are very fond of whisky and other spirits—"waipiro," as they call it—but of late years drunkenness has been on the decrease with them. The tourists are always much interested in the Maori, and those of them who live by the tourist have become very cunning. They dance a "haka," or Maori war-dance, for their edification, and with eyes rolling and hanging tongue rush upon an imaginary enemy in a body. They keep splendid time, and, well done, the dance is very effective.

Some of the Maori carved work is very quaint. The fronts of their "whares," or houses, are sometimes grotesquely carved, while their carved greenstone ornaments are eagerly sought by visitors. Their "tikis" are particularly desired. These are curious little figures carved in strange positions. When the King, as Prince of Wales, was in New Zealand he visited Rotorua, and the Maori gave a great "haka" in honour of Te Rangatira ("the big chief"), and presented him and the Queen with many beautiful and curious specimens of native work in mats and greenstone, and also with a carved "pataka," which is now, I think, in the British Museum.

The Maori are splendid swimmers, and they can do almost anything in reason in a canoe. They have canoe hurdle-races in the regattas. A pole is fastened across two uprights so that it stands a little way out of the water. The Maori paddle their canoes at this as fast

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as they can. As they near it they run to the stern of the canoe. This tilts it up, and causes the prow to glide up over the pole or hurdle. Now is the time. The occupants of the canoe slip forward quickly. The canoe slides down the other side, and they are paddling away for dear life, baling out the canoe, or struggling in the water, as the case may be.

There is no ill-feeling between the Maori and the Pakeha. The white man fought him many years ago, and found out what a brave fellow he was. Since then he has lived with him long years, and has found that when he is well treated the Maori is a good and intelligent citizen. So now they get on very well together, and I doubt if there is another case on record of an aboriginal people occupying so honoured a place with their white conquerors as do the New Zealand Maori, and deserving it so well.

How the Maori came to New Zealand, and when or whence, is by no means certain. All kinds of efforts have been made to connect him with places as far apart as Mexico and the Malay Peninsula. This mystery does not make him any the less interesting, but, presuming that he came by sea, it must have been a wonderful voyage, for the largest war-canoe is by no means an ideal vessel for a trip of even a few weeks on the ocean. I have not seen any evidence yet that he was there before the connecting bits that originally *may* have joined New Zealand to Asia were torn away by volcanic action or some other convulsion of Nature.

The Maori

In some places where the tribes are well organized they own vast numbers of sheep and cattle, and take a great and natural pride in looking after the animals, for are they not part proprietors?

They are very fond of the "kumera," or sweet potato, and hundreds of acres of it are grown by them. It really is a very nice vegetable, and is a favourite with many of the Pakehas.

The Maori are very fond of fish and eels, and they are remarkably dexterous in catching them. They generally use European utensils for cooking now, as they are very ready to take advantage of the inventions of the white man. When they are near a steam-hole they, of course, use it, and sometimes they adopt their old plan of heating stones, and then putting the food away with them in a hole in the earth, covering it over with dampened leaves, and filling the earth in on top. It is astonishing how palatable the food cooked like this is.

In the days when the Maori had to fight for his life he used to construct fortifications or stockades. These were called "pa." A "pa" was generally built on a hill, and consisted of a series of steps fenced in with solid boughs of trees and young saplings lashed together. The lower tiers frequently had subterranean communication with those immediately above them. Round about the Auckland district the terraced sides of the volcanic hills show unmistakable signs of their war-like use, and in some of them there are caves where lie the bones of those who perhaps in the days gone by shed

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their blood on the peaceful velvety green turf that now is used for golf-links or public park.

In his old bad days the Maori was a cannibal. He left nothing to chance, and when he had killed his enemy he ate him. It is said that he became quite fond of the white man, whom he called by a Maori name meaning "long white pig." He gave that up long ago, and for very many years has confined himself to a more rational diet.

The Maori are exceedingly fond of athletic sports generally, and particularly of Rugby football. Some years ago a team of Maori footballers came home to England, and played a lot of matches. They did not, however, do very well. Rugby in those days was not what it now is in New Zealand.

Some of the better-class Maori are keen golfers, and in Hawkes Bay there are some Maori golfers who would surprise any but the best on English courses.

CHAPTER XI

SEASIDE LIFE

A HOLIDAY spent at the seaside in New Zealand is a very delightful experience. The coastline abounds with bays and coves, and there is nearly always a good beach. Where this is exposed to the ceaseless pounding of the ocean surf it packs until it is as smooth and nearly as hard as a cement track. This makes an ideal cycling

Seaside Life

track and road. In some places the coaches run along the beach, and so firm is it that the wheels do not sink more than a tyre's thickness into it.

On some of the West Coast iron-sand beaches the sand packs so tightly that the shoes of the horses almost ring as one gallops along them. At Ahipara, in the North of Auckland, there is a famous beach, called the Ninety-mile Beach, that would, if it were not quite so far away, be a serious rival to the celebrated motoring beach-track in Florida.

A gallop along these sands close to the edge of the boiling surf is an exhilarating experience. The noise and the wind seem to excite the horses, and they enter into the spirit of the fun. The spindrift dashes in one's face as one flies along, and the keen air that has come many thousands of miles with naught to do but gather ozone acts like a tonic on man and horse.

This is on the exposed ocean beaches, but in the bays and coves and little harbours nestle many charming spots, the beach of yellow sand and varicoloured shells backed by the picturesque evergreen, bush-clad hills that rise above it, while the water's edge is fringed by the beautiful pohutukawa, a mass of crimson glory in the rich glow of the midsummer sun: for that is when it is always at its best, and is the reason why its English name is the Christmas-tree. It is a splendid hard wood, with gnarled and quaintly bent boughs. Shipbuilders use it for "knees," and the "stems" and "sterns" of boats, for Dame Nature has already done

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the bending for them, and she does it better than any man or any steam can do it.

Tucked away on the fringe of the bush are many quaint little bungalow-like cottages, where the residents of the town for months at a time lead about the nearest approach to the simple life that civilization will allow. Generally these places are near enough to the city to allow the head of the house to get in and out to his business without too much inconvenience, and about Christmas-time, which is, of course, near the New Zealand midsummer, he is not particular about going in every day, especially if there is, as there generally is, a telephone within a few miles. Sometimes at high tide he cannot get round the beach to catch the boat that takes him up to the city. Then the others must row him out, and cut her off as she passes, perhaps go out for him and any visitors in the evening. This is always an extra event in the day, and is a very convenient way of getting supplies when the roads are not good.

These are not cities by the sea. Here men and women become boys and girls again, and romp, and fish, and row, and swim in the delightfully limpid waters that lave the tawny shores. There is an utter absence of ceremony in the life. If the tide is full early in the morning everybody turns out for a bathe. Man and woman, boy and girl, are soon tumbling about in the warm, crystal-clear water. There is mirth and mischief, and never a thought of "mixed" bathing, for

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they have never known any other. It is a delightful sight to see some of the little girls swimming and diving like little brown ducks, for a few weeks of this life soon tans the roses, and makes the delicate pink cheeks take on a swarthier hue, that leaves it when school has to be undertaken again ; but these weeks mean store of health and strength to face the tasks that have to be done.

After the swim comes breakfast. Perhaps the boys have been out hours before, and there are great fillets of king-fish, or fresh schnapper, fried and browned to a turn, that were darting about in the sea but an hour or two before. And let me tell you that no fish is like the fish that comes straight from the water into the frying-pan or on to the gridiron.

Dressing is not much trouble. The men will have a pair of knickerbockers or trousers well rolled up, and a tennis shirt. The women and girls wear as little as may be, and very thin at that, for directly breakfast is over they will be paddling in the rock-pools or the sea, perchance in for another dip, or away with the boys, fishing or sailing. Perhaps stores are low. Then someone must go to the nearest store. Then there must be more decorum, and soon a merry party drive off in the tax-cart or buggy, as the case may be, to return laden with the good things that help to make even this simple life go well. It may be a keg of ale, a case of wine, a 25-pound block of ice for the ice-chest, a turkey, boxes of luscious strawberries, sweet little round Dukes that put to shame anything I ever tasted anywhere

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else, jars of clotted cream, and other little luxuries. Sometimes these will be brought by boat, at other times a tradesman will call, often driving his horse and cart round the beach to get to some secluded bay.

Christmas weather in New Zealand is not suited for roast beef and plum-pudding, although many people still stick to the good old custom. Others, however, prefer cold turkey, poultry, or game, strawberries and cream, fruit and ices, and this suits the weather—and the digestion—much better.

If fishing or driving has not taken our "simple lifers" too far away, lunch comes on between noon and one o'clock. The men take their hats or caps off—generally—for lunch, if they happen to wear them. That is all the difference they make, and it is the same for dinner. There the shimmering waters lave the golden sand, and perhaps it is but a few yards of soft turf between sea and bungalow, and directly dinner is over it's "Who's for fishing?" "Who's going for stores?" So in almost perfectly natural surroundings a charming holiday may be spent. It is into the water for a swim, out again for breakfast and a fish, or mayhap a few miles with gun and dog; into the water again for a dip; just come and go, and do what strikes you on the spur of the moment. If you feel lazy you may lie at ease in your hammock beneath the great blazing pohutukawas, with your favourite book and pipe, and watch the white-winged mosquito fleet come and go, with now and again a stately liner in or out, filled

Seaside Life

with sons of England coming to taste the delights of the "Britain of the South," or with New Zealanders going to see what "home" really is like; and presently you hear a hail, and, running down to the water's edge, find a yacht full of friends, a merry, riotous crew of "simple lifers," who have looked you up perhaps from some little bay or island twenty or thirty miles away. Away goes your book, and it is cricket or rounders on the turf, or leapfrog on the beach; and now your boats are coming back, and there is greeting, and laughing, and merry horseplay, and soon your large family is sitting down to lunch or dinner on the grass under the spreading trees—bare-legged, brown-faced men and boys, with sleeves rolled up, and yachting caps thrown back, the picture of health and strength and happiness, and laughing, rollicking sailor-girls no whit behind them in fun and frolic.

Perhaps someone suggests a dance. Then there is a great "korero," which is Maori for talk, and in a few days' time there will be a rendezvous at some house which has a room large enough. It will most likely be a glorious moonlight night, and they will come from miles around in tax-carts, in buggies, on horse-back and bicycles, walking over the fern-clad hills, clambering round the rocky points that divide your cove from the next, gliding into the glassy bay with white wings fluttering and trembling in the rippling, silvery sheen of the phosphorescent waters, or bustling in with the splash of the oars, whose "plunk, plunk,

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plunk" in the rowlocks you have heard for miles over the still water.

Truly they are wonderful people for enjoying themselves ; and now you wonder where the "simple lifers" keep their frocks and other things, for here you see them with the daintiest of shoes hiding the pretty brown feet you saw paddling in the translucent waves but a few hours ago. Ay, and they can dance, too, as well as they can pull or swim or ride—in a word, they are living ; they are full of life, and the joy of it.

Sometimes at Christmas, especially such a one as the last, when I am tramping about in the whirling, blinding snow and the chocolate-coloured, ankle-deep slush one day, and the thick grey fog the next, my mind flies back to the merry people down below who are revelling in the sunshine in summer isles of Eden, in the sunshine that gets into the blood and the heart. Is it a wonder if sometimes I think I should like to be there, and to take with me millions who never get the sun into their houses, let alone their hearts ?

CHAPTER XII

THE NEW ZEALAND WORKING-MAN

COMPARED with his English brother, the New Zealand workman lives the life of a gentleman—and is one. His skin is clearer and his eye is brighter. He slings his shoulders over his hips, and carries his chest in front

The New Zealand Working-Man

of his shoulders. He holds his head up, and looks the world in the face, for he feels within himself that he is "in the picture," that he is a part of the general scheme, that he has "a say in it," that he may some day, if he wants to, be the first man in it. He never lacks food or clothing, and his children are never cold. They are well educated, and nearly always happy and hearty.

Sometimes, I fear, you will think I am too enthusiastic about New Zealand, that I paint too glowing a picture. It is not so, I assure you. Were I an English workman, and did I know as much of New Zealand as I do, I should get there if I had to swim.

You may say, if I think so much of it, why do I not live there always? The answer is simple. It doesn't stimulate me. It is too easy to succeed in mediocrity. There I never feel that I want to work; here I never feel that I want to play. There I always played; here I work day and night—and count it pleasure. When I am there London calls me all the time with her silent, ceaseless, irresistible call; when I am here I am at rest. From this you may see that for one who does not want to have his finger ever on the pulse of the world, that throbs here always, there is, in my opinion, no place in the world like New Zealand, especially for the industrious working-man.

He is indeed a poor man who cannot make himself comfortable in New Zealand. There is in that favoured land of sunshine no poverty as we understand it here. In all the years I lived there I think I saw but

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one ragged beggar. He wore such a fearful suit that one day I spoke to him. I had an old suit that I thought would do for him quite well. I took him aside and said : " If you will be here at this time to-morrow I shall have a parcel sent to you."

I shall never forget his quaint answer. He shifted his basket of oranges and sweets from one arm to another, and looked at me for a moment, then said : " Thankee, sir—thankee kindly. I nearly guess what would be in it. Don't 'ee trouble, sir—don't 'ee trouble."

Some time after this he came out of a land-agent's office as I went in. I knew the agent well, so said : " What is that old beggar doing here ?"

" Collecting his rents," he answered, with a laugh. " He owns quite a lot of houses."

Then I understood. His suit was part of his stock-in-trade.

He is the only beggar I can remember, and I never saw him beg. He sold things, but I think his suit helped him.

The working-man in New Zealand generally takes a keen interest in politics. He has found out that he is of some importance. He has aspirations. Here he knows that he is of no importance, except, perhaps, if he should chance to have a vote, about election-time ; there he always has a vote, and if things are not going as he thinks they should, he or his union will very quickly have something to say.

The New Zealand Working-Man

The working-men of New Zealand get very good wages. They live well, and have much more amusement than do working-men in England.

It is not uncommon for such men in New Zealand to own their own houses, and drive their own horses and traps. Many of them own other property. Frequently they live a little way out of town, and have a few acres of land. Then they generally have a cow, some fowls, and a pig, and grow their own vegetables and fruit.

They often have bicycles, and sometimes they club together and run a yacht between them. They go in for rowing and football, rifle-shooting, cricket, fishing, shooting, swimming, and many other amusements that are practically unobtainable for the British workman, who generally has to choose between betting and the bar—of the public-house, I mean, of course.

I can remember the time when I used to think the working-man was asking too much. This was about the time that the Goddess of Labour began to make it apparent that she thought she was entitled to some consideration. Since then they have got more and more, and I, who have since seen the working-men of the world, know that they were right in what they did, and that they are to-day the best off and best cared for of any in the world. In time the English working-man will awake to feel that he is an Englishman, and that the mere fact of being an Englishman gives, or ought to give, him rights and privileges which

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he has not. Then he will get them, for he has the power.

It naturally follows that the wife of the working-man of the Dominion has a correspondingly good time. It must not be thought that out there the working classes don't have to work. They do, and very hard, too, some of them; but they do not suffer anything like the privations and disabilities that those in similar positions here have to put up with.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BUSH

“FOREST” is a word that is never used in New Zealand when speaking of her tree-clad hills. “Bush” is what it is always called. The New Zealand bush is very dense. It is a mixture of giant trees and dense undergrowth. The stately kauri rears his head scores of feet above the trailing supple-jack and the grasping lawyer, while these in their turn are often almost concealed in a mass of feathery ferns.

The kauri is the king of New Zealand trees. It is a stately, if somewhat stiff-looking tree, with an enormous bole and a somewhat formal spread of foliage. It is well shown in the picture, and is really, although one might not think so from my description, a beautiful tree. It is, of course, the chief of timber trees, and, as such, is being ruthlessly destroyed—indeed, already

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men who should know are beginning to speculate as to how long the kauri will last in New Zealand before the grasping march of the timber dealer. The kauri attains a great size, sometimes exceeding 150 feet in height and 20 feet in diameter.

The rata is an interesting tree. It starts life as a seedling, often quite high up in the branches of the tree that is to be its victim. It winds lovingly round a giant kauri a slender, caressing tendril. Anon it expands, and encircles it in its network with a stronger grip, and in the course of years that grip closes in on the monarch of the bush like the folds of a mighty boa-constrictor, and crushes the life out of it. Then the rata, now a great tree, instead of a tender vine, stands where stood the noble kauri.

The totara is a splendid tree, and its wood is exceedingly strong and durable. It is largely used for wharf-piles and fencing-posts. The puriri is another fine wood that furnishes most of the railway-sleepers.

New Zealand is rich in beautiful cabinet-making woods. I cannot remember them all, but a few are mottled kauri, puriri, rewa rewa, rimu, and totara.

The rimu is one of the most graceful of New Zealand trees. It has a very pretty, almost feathery-looking foliage, and the tree itself is frequently of a slender nature.

The pohutukawa, the cheery, crimson-blossomed Christmas-tree, I have mentioned elsewhere. It also is a fine hard wood, and is used for many purposes other than boat-building.

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The New Zealand bush is evergreen. We therefore do not have the beautiful tints of the English spring and autumn. On the other hand, except in the imported trees, we do not see for months at a time the gaunt bare arms that seem so cold. There is a charm in the New Zealand bush that is hard to describe. That it is very beautiful those who have been privileged to see it will readily admit. At certain times it is perhaps a little sombre, but in the season there are many beautiful and interesting flowers. There is the flaming rata, the yellow and red kowhai, the golden berry of the karaka, the giant fuchsias (which there are great trees), the crimson glory of the pohutukawa, and many other bright and cheerful blossoms.

There are two shrubs or trees that are poisonous; these are the karaka and the tutu. The karaka is a handsome tree, and is frequently planted in gardens and parks. It has a large, bright, leathery leaf, and an orange-yellow berry. It is said that the poison of the karaka distorts the limbs of the person eating it, and leaves them rigid in their distortion. I can only say that I never heard of such a case, nor have I heard of a child being poisoned by karaka berries; but there is no doubt that they are poisonous.

The other evil plant is the tutu. The berries and shoots of the tutu are undoubtedly poisonous, as many a poor stock-owner has cause to know. Cattle and sheep eat it, and die from the effects of the strong poison.



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The supple-jack, mentioned by me early in this chapter, is a long, flexible parasite that flings its rope-like lengths in black snaky coils, and stretches from tree to tree in the air and from root to root beneath the ferns, so that, unless you "gang warily," it will trip you up, and then get you by the neck as you fall ; but it really is very harmless, if aggravating, and the boys use it largely for sticks. If cut out by the root it frequently has a curiously shaped, bulging head, which makes a good handle.

The lawyer, as is indeed quite natural, is a far more dangerous customer. It is a trailing creeper, and is generally called the bush-lawyer. It is armed with a multitude of curved hooks, which insinuate themselves into your garments, and sometimes even into your skin. They cling on to one with great persistence, and once they have obtained a good hold are hard indeed to shake off without the loss of some blood or temper, or both. Shall we say that it is not well-named ?

The New Zealand bush has many very beautiful and interesting plants and ferns, the ferns particularly being very fine. There is one that I sometimes think is the sweetest fern in the world. It is called the Prince of Wales's feathers. Its proper name is *Todea superba*. It resembles nothing so much as ostrich-feathers curled and dyed green. It grows to a great size. I have seen fronds 3 and 4 feet long, but it is at its best when it is a little fern, and the tiny pea-green fronds begin to unfold in delicate fragile loveliness.

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CHAPTER XIV

IN THE COUNTRY

TOWN-LIFE in New Zealand runs on much as it does in any other place. Naturally, we move in a narrower groove than do those who work amongst the personalities of the world, but to many, especially to those who have never known or even seen the other, or who, having seen it, realize that to them it is unattainable, the life is all-sufficing. It is well that it is so. It makes for contentment and prosperity, and, after all, there is much, very much, to be said for the easy, comfortable life that so many of New Zealand's happy people lead. Neither very rich nor very poor, knowing full well that in the nature of things it is impossible for them to make themselves as individuals felt in the great world, they go always onward. Sufficient for their day is the labour thereof, and so they go forward, building up comfortable homes and sound little businesses, for out there industry, intelligence, and fair-dealing nearly always get their reward, nor have they long to wait for it.

In the country, however, it is different. Country-life in New Zealand has characteristics which I think are distinctly its own. Its climate, its bush, its conformation, differ from any other of England's dependencies in many ways, and there is in much of it features that appeal strongly to the best of England's

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sons, of whom I am glad to say we have many who are even now, as did their forefathers before them, breaking in the virgin bush, making prosperous homesteads out of the green wilderness. I do not think I am going too far in saying that for the strong, healthy man who likes the life, country-life in New Zealand offers more attraction than that of any other of our possessions.

Hard work there is, and plenty of it, for him who would succeed, but it need not necessarily be made very arduous, especially if one has a little capital; and there are many compensations. The farmer is not often prevented from working by bad weather. He has no blizzards or severe heat to contend with. Cold it is sometimes, no doubt, and there are days in summer when the heat haze dances in the air, and work seems out of place; but there is nothing to grumble at so far as regards climate, and that to the outdoor man is a most important item.

Of late years dairy-farming has increased wonderfully, and nearly all those who are engaged in it are doing well. Many of the farms are worked in a most up-to-date manner, and the milking is done to a large extent by machinery, thus saving a great deal of the drudgery of the old methods.

The majority of settlers in New Zealand either own their land or hold it on terms which enable them to make it their own by payment of instalments. In other cases they have leases from the Government on very easy terms—so easy, in fact, that it often pays

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them better to lease than to put their money into the land, as thus they can afford to buy more cattle and farm implements.

A great number of the settlers go in almost wholly for sheep and cattle raising, and these, since the inauguration of the frozen-meat trade, have been able to get much better prices. Life on some of these places, especially when the worst of the battle has been got over, when there is a comfortable little wooden house with a corrugated-iron roof, and some stables, barns, and cowsheds, is not by any means unpleasant. There is generally a school within a few miles, and the children ride to this, sometimes two and three on the same pony. Sometimes, when there are not many children in a district, it may have what they call a half-time school, which means that the teacher takes another school, perhaps ten miles away, and divides his time between the two.

On these places there is, of course, always plenty of fresh milk and butter, and good meat, and there is many a good cock pheasant and wood-pigeon that comes into the larder, while rabbits are always to be had for the trouble of shooting them. In many districts they are such a pest that poison is laid wholesale for them. The stoats and weasels were intended to "amuse" them, but they developed a strong preference for poultry, and bunny has not suffered appreciably since the introduction of these little vermin.

The country children begin to be of service to their

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parents at a very early age. I remember one sturdy urchin of nine who was in the habit of driving a waggon and four horses into the nearest village during his holidays. The ease and confidence with which he managed his big team was wonderful.

I am giving you a rough glance at the home of the small settler. On the other hand, you will on many of the large stations find every convenience a reasonable man could desire, and in the houses of the wealthy life is made pleasant by a standard of comfort and luxury that would surprise many a visitor from England who has not got rid of his ideas of a sheep-“farmer” gathered from the coloured prints which “artists” in the early days of colonization used to evolve out of their own “inner consciousness.”

Here you will perchance find that your host has a buggy or two, a waggonette, a motor-car, and a billiard-table. His sons may surprise you by coming down to dinner in evening dress after changing their polo “rig.” You will find good wine, good books, good cigars, and cultured ladies whom you would feel pleased to take to supper at the Savoy. So that it will be clear that life in New Zealand, even in the country, is not the kind of thing that should excite so much pity in the breast of the Englishman or Englishwoman—chiefly the latter—as it does.

A friend of mine told me of another amusing instance of ignorance that came under her notice. She was introduced to an Englishwoman whose social position

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was not so great as she wished people to think it. She, poor woman, was reduced to "putting on side." The New Zealand lady happened to have been born in England, but, as she had lived in the Dominion all her life, she always calls herself a New Zealander, and both there and here she occupies a very good social position.

Said the would-be great: "Do you see many English people out there?"

"Well, considering that we are all English, we naturally see a few," was the answer.

"I suppose, though," said the irrepressible one, "that they are awfully glad to see anyone from England?"

"Oh yes," said the Anglo-New Zealander, "if they come duly accredited, or have letters of introduction to responsible people, they are always well looked after. You must understand," she added, "that the mere statement that you come from England is not a passport anywhere, for we have thousands of English visitors travelling all over the place or living there."

"Indeed," said her interrogator; "I was not aware of that."

"You are not singular in that respect," said my friend, perhaps a trifle frigidly, and the conversation languished a little.

The progress of New Zealand has been very rapid. It has a good system of railways, which are in the hands of the Government. Most of the districts are well served. Auckland, perhaps, is most neglected, particularly in the North. There is much fine country

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north of Auckland, but here the roads and the lack of railway-lines are little short of a scandal. The Government is, however, now slowly pushing on the railway, and it will not be many years before the main-trunk railway which connects Auckland with Wellington will be worthy of its name.

There is much sociability in the country-life of New Zealand. It is no uncommon thing for young people—ay, and for young-old people—to ride or drive thirty miles to a dance. I have known them do it with their clothes in a basket or kit strapped to the saddle, dance all night, and go back next day to perhaps another one twenty miles away. It is amazing what many of them can and will do when a dance is to be had.

It is in the new countries that one learns what true hospitality means. In them men come long distances to see one. The first thing that has to be seen to is his horse. Sometimes, of course, his host has to do it himself. Then the man and his wife, and perhaps their children, have to be looked after. They must be hungry and thirsty. They are taken away and looked after immediately. There is no waiting for set hours for anything there, and all the while they are with you, be it in the great house of the sheep station or the cottage of the 200-acre man, the guest is the first consideration. Here we get out of the way of much of this.

We feel that until he came into our door there were waiters and porters and restaurants and hotels all round

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him. We feel that directly we see him out of our door they are waiting for him again. This destroys a good deal of that genuine old-fashioned hospitality that one is apt to associate with the name of John Bull. One of the things that strikes a colonial visitor with a good deal of unpleasant force is the manner in which guests have to buy their way about their host's houses. In New Zealand this would mean dismissal for the servants. There, while a guest is within one's doors, he "owns the house." I saw, some little while ago, that a Lord Somebody was trying to stop the habit of tipping, which had grown to be an abuse at his country-seat. He could not think of any better way to do it than to put up a kind of post-box in his hall, into which guests were to drop their contributions ! There is much unconscious humour in this.

Although the roads in New Zealand are very good in summer, there are still many places where in winter all stores and supplies have to be brought in by pack-horse, frequently over very dangerous roads and through torrential rivers, where to miss the ford means ruin to the stores, if not death to the unfortunate pack-horse. There is plenty of pioneering work to be done in New Zealand yet. It is hard for those who have lived all their lives in the garden that England is to understand how it can be that in a country just about the same size there can still exist millions of acres where the axe of man has never disturbed the solitude, nor the cooe of the stock-rider called up an echo.



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A curious feature of country-life in New Zealand, and one that is practically peculiar to the North of Auckland, is "gum-digging," as it is called there. This refers to what is known to those outside Auckland as kauri-gum digging.

The kauri is a particularly resinous tree. If it is cut it exudes a thick milky-coloured viscous fluid that gradually hardens on being exposed to the air. This resinous discharge sometimes hangs in immense festoons from the branches of the trees. It is gathered by men, who climb up for it. This is called "bush-gum," and is not so valuable as that which is dug up from the earth where long ago the forest giants had their home. In those days, many scores of years ago, the gum that exuded from the trees beneath the earth formed into solid lumps. As the decades rolled on this became harder and harder, until at last it assumed the beautiful transparency and colour of amber. Then it is valuable, and worth as much as £200 a ton. There are hundreds of tons of this scattered about the North Islands.

When a man cannot do anything else he goes "gum-digging," for he can nearly always get credit at the store for his outfit and some "stores," and a few boughs and some ti-tree will make him a shelter. Many a broken remittance-man has eked out his living on the gum-fields of Auckland, waiting for good news from England.

It is not so remunerative now as it used to be, for the land has been dug and dug again ; but still great

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numbers of men make a living, and a good living, at it. Many settlers find the gum on their land quite an addition to their income.

It is sometimes got out of swamp-land by probing for it with a long spear.

CHAPTER XV

NEW ZEALAND SCENERY

FEW countries, perhaps, have such varied and beautiful scenery as New Zealand. She has in the North the thermal springs district, with its fine Lakes Rotorua, Rotoiti, and Taupo, and its many and weirdly beautiful springs, geysers, pools, mud-baths, and steam-holes, its great active volcanoes and its pumice-plains, its rapids and waterfalls ; while in the South are the noble fiords or sounds, as they are called, the ice-bound Alps, with their towering peaks, and the great cold lakes in Otago. The coastline bristles with picturesque harbours, islands, and capes, and many of the cities are very beautifully situated. This, however, is but a very general statement of what one who visits New Zealand may expect to see, so I must try to give my readers some more specific description of some of the chief points of interest in the Dominion.

Perhaps the greatest of New Zealand's many attractions are the West Coast Sounds. They in many ways resemble the fiords of Norway. There are about fifteen to eighteen of them. They are very narrow and extremely deep, and in several cases they run

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inland for over twenty miles. The bush-clad cliffs rise sheer up from the water's edge, and tower many hundreds of feet above the steamer's deck, making the boat seem but a toy within a well-like lake, for frequently one's view is entirely land-locked, so tortuous are the windings of these slender harbours. Milford Haven is in some places over 1,300 feet deep.

The Sounds district is very moist. It is riddled and seamed by innumerable creeks, streams, and waterfalls. The great Sutherland Fall, over 1,900 feet high, is situated about thirteen miles from the coast. It is a great sight, but is somewhat dwarfed by the grandeur of the surrounding scenery.

Milford Sound in places is little more than 500 yards wide, while its cliffs rise sheer up to over 5,000 feet above the still green water. The Bowen Fall is about 600 feet high. It is one of the features of Milford Haven. It really consists of two falls, and is most picturesque.

Mount Cook, or, to give it its Maori name, Aorangi, is New Zealand's Mont Blanc. It is 12,349 feet in height. The mountains of New Zealand are not lofty, but Mount Cook is well worthy of the efforts of any Alpine climber. It has been ascended several times now, but it only yields to the stoutest climbers.

The beauty of the Southern lakes cannot adequately be dealt with here, nor, indeed, is it possible, even with unlimited space, to do them justice in words—Wakaitipu, Te Anau, Manapouri, Wanaka, and Hawea must be seen.

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The River Wanganui has been called the Rhine of New Zealand. It is undoubtedly a very beautiful stream, and of late years has increased greatly in popularity with tourists, as the accommodation on the boats and at the hotels has improved. English visitors are always impressed with the charm of the trip, for a greater contrast to the trim banks of the Thames, with its miles of century-old turf and ivy-clad mansions, could not well be imagined.

The Aratiatia Rapids, near Lake Taupo, in the thermal springs district, are one of the most beautiful sights in New Zealand. They are some little way below the Huka Falls. You come upon them suddenly after a few yards in the virgin bush. You walk out on to a jutting rock, and stand facing a swirling tumult of snowy foaming water that is churned into fleecy masses of dazzling whiteness that lie like feathery lace upon some green translucent softness, deep and ever changing, until at times you wonder if it is green or blue; and then the sun bursts through the branches above, and you see that it is snow on the lightest of greens, with the deepest of body, hurrying, changing, boiling, hissing, now here, now there, now lost behind a black rock, now leaping it, now gone, now back again, lit up by the golden sunny gleam; now lurking, an electric blue, beside another sombre boulder, sulking; anon a flash, and the merry green gleams again, and the feathery lace on it, as it dances and gleams, plays and broods, and tears on its capricious way with a sense of mighty power that calls to you, that seems to say, siren-like :

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“Come to me ; rest on my bosom ; ride with me to the great ocean away from the fretting, narrow confinement. Come.” You cannot help feeling the fascination of the mighty power of this river, crushed between the narrow, rock-bound passage, impeded by the enormous boulders lodged in its impetuous way ; but you know that to lie one moment on the siren’s breast would be never to leave it, for there your spirit would stay.

There is a fascination in these beautiful rapids beyond that of those greater ones at Niagara.

Undoubtedly, Auckland Harbour is one of the finest sights in New Zealand. It is approached by the Rangitoto Channel, so called from the cone-shaped island volcano, now happily extinct, that guards the entrance to the harbour. The shore side of this channel is formed by a long spit or peninsula known as the North Shore. This is a very picturesque spot. In the channel its shore is dotted with picturesque beaches, by which cluster the bungalow-like cottages of the residents. On the Auckland side of this spit the settlement is very thick indeed—quite a little town has sprung up. There is a hill called Mount Victoria—another volcanic cone—on this peninsula, and it is finally rounded off by the North Head, a flattish, dome-shaped knoll of picturesque outline.

As one sweeps round the North Head and “opens up” the harbour, its beauty and extent become apparent. The town lies some three or four miles from the entrance to the harbour. The shores and the

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sloping, verdure-clad hills that roll away upwards are sprinkled thickly with picturesque villa residences. Afar, some three miles behind the city, but appearing much nearer, stands the famed Mount Eden, another extinct volcano. Auckland must, in its day, have been a very warm place. I do not know how many volcanic cones one can count within a radius of ten or fifteen miles. I know they are reckoned by tens. They are, however, very beautiful landmarks, and as they are nearly all reserved for public domains, they are favourite resorts for the people on Sundays and holidays.

From the summit of Mount Eden may be obtained a view that, so far as my experience goes, is absolutely unrivalled. Here New Zealand is very narrow. From Auckland on the East Coast to Onehunga on the West is by road but seven miles ; as the crow flies it is much less. The waters of the two harbours at one point flow by creeks to within a quarter of a mile of each other.

Standing on Mount Eden, and looking over towards the West Coast, one's eye travels over a beautiful expanse of velvet turf cut into fields by black stone walls, and dotted with red-roofed houses. Away in the distance lies the Manukān Harbour, with its famous, or infamous, bar at the Heads, where lie the remains of the ill-fated warship *Orpheus*, wrecked there many years ago.

The story runs that there was a deserter on board who knew the coast and harbour well. He knew that the ship was going to certain destruction, and asked to be allowed to show them the channel, and take them safely in. His request was not listened to, and a few

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minutes later the *Orpheus* was breaking up, and her crew being washed away, corpses, to make food for the ravening sharks.

From here one can see on a clear day the tops of the distant hills, where lies the little gold-fields town of Coromandel.

On the other side the city of Auckland seems to nestle at our feet, and sweep away down to the smooth waters of the Waitemata that run in an ever-narrowing stream for miles up to Riverhead. Beyond the North Shore and Rangitoto are the beautiful islands of Motutapu and Waiheke, and far away out in the ocean may be seen the outlines of the Barrier. In the distance stretches the Hauraki Gulf, dotted all over with islets that charm the yachtsman.

Some thirty miles away lies Kawau, once the island-home of Sir George Grey, and supposed to be very rich in minerals, principally copper. Efforts are now being made to prove it.

Perhaps the most beautiful mountain in New Zealand is Mount Egmont, the snow-clad sentinel who watches over New Plymouth. This mountain is apparently the same shape whichever way one looks at it.

The Waikato is the principal river of the Auckland district, and it is in many places very beautiful. It is a comparatively shallow, swift-running stream, and cannot be navigated by large boats, but forms a very useful waterway for steam-launches and vessels of shallow draught.

Of New Zealand lakes that are not so well known to

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the travelling public I may mention Lake Waikaremoana, which has lately been opened up by the Government. It is a large and beautiful lake, and may be reached by road from Rotorua or from Napier. Some of the scenery on this lake is equal to anything in New Zealand, but one will not find so far north the snow-clad ranges that look down in icy silence on Lake Wakatipu.

Few scenes are more charming than early morning on a New Zealand lake, and when one is after duck it is frequently very "early morning." As you sit in your canoe with gun across your arm, peering out into the darkness with intent eyes, you see the faint gleam of coming day. The mist gathers on your moustache and eyelids. Presently the sun begins to force his way through. You glide silently on now, for your propeller has stopped paddling as he nears a likely corner. The banks are reflected in the still water, so that you cannot tell which is land and which illusion. Innumerable diamond-spangled cobwebs cling to the reeds. Away on the far side the mist is rolling like a fleecy tablecloth off the purple hills. Straight ahead the sun glows dully like a red ball through the moisture-laden air, until the curtain lifts, and he pours his rich red rays on hill and dale and feathery forest, and you know that it is broad, beautiful, sunny New Zealand day, and you are very happy, or ought to be.

